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The ANTIOCH REVIEW

"Why should there not be a patient confidence in the ultimate justice of the people? Is there any better or equal hope in the world?"

—ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

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The ANTIOCH REVIEW

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EDITORIAL

IT TAKES, perhaps, uncommon brashness to plunge into the intellectual struggle at a time which Max Lerner has so aptly described as that of the "breaking of nations." When values are everywhere toppling in the high winds of conflicting dogmas there are those who would seek refuge in a quiet cloister or an ivory tower. Such an escape is not unattractive; it is impossible. No intellectual, almost by definition, can be indifferent today to the social struggle or to the blackout of learning, literature, and the arts which accompanies defeat in that struggle. If the march of fascism has demonstrated nothing else it is that the scholar is not above society, but is inextricably intertwined in its meshes. The destruction of democracy commences with the erosion of the intellectual classes.

The battle for a humanistic social order is, therefore, a matter of prime importance to all intellectuals. Their very existence depends upon victory in that struggle. Yet the argument cannot be allowed to rest on this level of naked self-interest. There are other stakes as well: basic values more precious even than life itself. There is the profound belief in the common man without which humanism is inconceivable. There is the conception, now heretical over most of the world, that men should be viewed as ends and not as means. There is the revolutionary idea that the social order exists for the furtherance of human welfare, rather than for the glorification of a narrow class. These are a few of the stakes in the gigantic power struggle which is the world's disease. Civilization today is being challenged in a civil war of unexampled magnitude; a civil war of which the present European conflict is merely one expression. What is at stake is the whole complex of values so painfully wrought in the years since the Enlightenment.

For the intellectual to maintain a lofty "objectivity" at such a time is not merely to commit suicide. If no more were involved than the self-destruction of a handful of ineffectuals, others would have little basis for complaints. But the consequences are more serious than this. We are confronted with a situation in which to be silent is to play the midwife at the birth of another Dark Age. The alternatives are clear-cut and unavoidable. He who does not now speak out assists in the degradation of the democratic doctrine as surely as the outright exponent of totalitarianism.

We do not propose to remain silent and it is our purpose to provide a forum for others who feel as we do. We believe in democracy, so strongly that we think it should be enormously extended. We believe that no scholar can fail to view with concern threats against basic human values, whether they originate inside or outside the country. We believe in an instrumental theory of knowledge and in the application of scholarship to the solution of social problems. We believe that the social role of the intellectual in our time is to employ ideas to further democracy in the fullest sense. We believe in the promise of American life and we would seek for the seeds of that promise. This is our purpose in founding a magazine.

THE DEFENSE OF DEMOCRACY

By J. DONALD KINGSLEY

Those who man our defenses, and those behind them who build our defenses, must have the stamina and courage which come from an unshakable belief in the manner of life which they are defending. The mighty action which we are calling for cannot be based on a disregard of all things worth fighting for.—FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT.

IN A TIME OF FAITH, Randolph Bourne has said, skepticism is the most intolerable of insults. He was speaking of the impotence of the intellectuals before the onslaught of war hysteria in 1917 and he was using the term faith in all its irrational connotations. I take it that we have again entered upon such a period. At least, skepticism seems in recent months to have been driven from the intellectual front. To be sure, its excision has not been total. It has crept back now and again under various guises, most usually in the form of distrust of reason itself. This, it seems to me, must be the key to such events as the publication of Mr. Waldo Frank's *Chart for Rough Water,* of Mr. Lewis Mumford's *Faith for Living,* or of Mr. Archibald MacLeish's now famous attack upon those "irresponsibles" so base as to depict war and to omit the glory. Nor is there anything atypical about the general position of these three. They merely leap to the mind as among the vanguard in the retreat from rationalism. They are symptomatic of a general malaise which is incapacitating the intellectual for the performance of his historic role.

Not, of course, that I wish to argue against faith in all its aspects. I agree wholly with Mr. Roosevelt that the defenders of a way of life must have an unshakable belief in it and I am not unaware of the motivating force of emotional commitment. Belief, to be effective, must be in the marrow as well as in the mind. But I submit that questioning is the beginning of wisdom and that for the intellectual at least faith must originate in skepticism. To overlook this fact is to abdicate leadership in the social crisis and to abandon oneself to the fiercest urgencies of the times. It is not enough to say Democracy is in danger and to rush from there to the barricades. The successful defense of anything depends upon an under-

standing both of its nature and of the threats to its existence. Only in the light of an analysis of both can strategy be effectively determined or weapons selected. For the intellectual, the recognition of danger is a prelude to instrumental thought.

The social conflict which is now convulsing the world is, in its larger aspects, readily understandable. It is the machine-age version of the ancient struggle between the few and the many for the control of strategic institutions. This fact is at present obscured by the complicating one of an international war which in many respects parallels the social struggle. The basic pattern is lost to view in the smoke pall over London. It is forgotten in the excitement engendered by the latest communiqué. Yet it must not be forgotten, for the campaign is always more important than the battle.

This is not to imply that the present war is unrelated to the basic social conflict or that we can be indifferent to its outcome. The analysis which views this as just another encounter between rival imperialisms is a partial one which fails to take account of significant potentials. Such a failure is fatal at the present time. In a period of social dynamism it is the intensity and direction of movement which counts and not the particular point reached in space-time. To ignore potentials when the social pattern is disintegrating is to neglect the only guideposts to the future.

Insofar, therefore, as democratic and authoritarian potentials are opposed in the present war, that war is related to the basic social struggle of our time. But it is not identical with it and the recognition of this fact is crucial to any analysis which is to provide a framework for significant action. The conflict between authoritarianism and democracy is only one aspect of the present war and the present war is only one aspect of the conflict between authoritarianism and democracy. It is necessary to emphasize the point, for its neglect is a prevailing mark of contemporary thought. It is also a dangerous one, since to proceed from a recognition of common elements to a conclusion of identity is to commit an elementary error in logic.

Yet it is precisely such an error which is either implicitly or explicitly involved in nearly all of our recent social thinking. It lies at the heart of the split in the progressive forces on the question of the European war and it produces a host of fantastic bedfellows. It confuses the issues involved in defense and serves as a lightning rod to draw off the collective

energies of the Left. For, depending upon whether the imperialist or the anti-fascist elements in the European conflict are taken as representations of the whole, there follow sharply opposed versions of the role of the progressive in respect to it. The result is indescribable confusion. Consider, for example, the intellectual affinities of Colonel Lindbergh, Theodore Dreiser, and Oscar Ameringer, or of Hugh Johnson and Earl Browder, or of Norman Thomas and Colonel McCormick. Or ponder such fellow travellers as Freda Kirchwey and Wendell Willkie, Max Lerner and James W. Gerard. Surely the 1940's will go down in history as the Years of the Queer Companions.

What is obviously needed is a searching and systematic analysis of the relation of democracy to the social crisis and of both to the present war. Only in the light of such an examination can the real problems of democratic defense be brought into focus. For no one but a social illiterate would suggest that the protection of a way of life is fundamentally a matter of guns and ships. The problems of defense are not resolved with the acquisition of material means. On this point at least, progressives from Harold Laski to Ralph Barton Perry can agree.

II

The crisis in which we now find ourselves has been long in preparation. It is not, as some would have us believe, the product of a sudden moral collapse or of the specific dislocations following upon the first World War. Even less is it the result of a mythical flabbiness attributable to overindulgence in mechanical gadgetry. We have not gone progressively soft, despite Mr. Mumford's distinguished insistence in *Faith for Living* that "inner decay comes first." He is right, of course, in asserting that something is rotten somewhere, and there is a real sense in which moral putrefaction has disarmed the democracies in the fight against fascism. But the rottenness is not, as he suggests, universal. It has, in fact, been peculiarly a class phenomenon. To argue on moral grounds, as Mr. Mumford does, is to beg the question of why the masses have valiantly resisted the encroachments of fascism while their leaders have everywhere betrayed them.

Mr. Mumford is wrong, also, it seems to me, in his insistence that fascism is to be explained in terms of "overweening pride, delight in cruelty, neurotic disintegration." That these are characteristics of indi-

vidual fascists no one would for a moment deny. But that consideration no more explains fascism than a similar description of the rulers of Spain in the sixteenth century explains the feudal system. What Mr. Mumford overlooks is the fact that a mass psychosis itself requires explanation and that that must be undertaken in other than psychological, or moral, or even technological terms.

With the exceptions of *Faith for Living,* which is a profound book despite its limitations, and of Harold Laski's *Where Do We Go From Here?,* most current analyses of the social crisis are superficial and non-historical. They fail to recognize that the forces in opposition at the present time are rooted in contradictions inherent in the foundations of Western culture. They mistake association for contingency. They view as political or moral what is in fact the collapse of a whole order. Or, as in the case of Theodore Dreiser's notable attempt to rationalize a party line (*America Is Worth Saving*), they are confined within pre-fabricated grooves. They fail to understand that in a period of social stability the dominant aspects of a society are always mutually consistent. In our own time such effective unity is lacking and the conflict of cultural elements produces a crisis of primary magnitude.

The foundations of the modern world—capitalism, political democracy, and technology—are all creations of the trading classes. They were the tools with which the revolutionary *bourgeoisie* climbed to power and the instrumentalities by which they maintained themselves as a ruling élite. They provided the foundations for an elaborate culture and their infusion with middle-class ideals and their application to middle-class ends lent a basic unity to the institutional superstructure erected upon them. Those ideals were, by and large, the ones appropriate to the market place and the perceived ends were pre-eminently the extension and protection of property interests.

From the eighteenth century onwards the acquisitive spirit is dominant in the West and the institution of private property becomes the center of the social universe. Indeed, as early as 1689 that great middle-class apologist, John Locke, linked property with life and liberty in a mystical trilogy of natural rights.[1] Even the law came to be regarded by Coke as founded

[1]This Lockian formulation was modified by Jefferson in our own DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE by striking out "property" and substituting "the pursuit of happiness." His emphasis, needless to say, did not survive the rule of the Federalists.

upon private property and a century later this proposition was elevated to a central position in Sir William Blackstone's *Commentaries.*[2] Finally, the realization of political democracy itself sprang from the desire of the trading classes to protect and extend their property rights against the state. To this fact observers as different as Adam Smith, Edmund Burke, and Walter Bagehot have testified.

The new materialism had no less far-reaching influences in other directions. It transformed the moral theory of the Church and was, as Max Weber and R. H. Tawney have shown, instrumental in the diffusion of Protestantism. At its touch avarice became thrift and usury prudent investment. It underlay, too, the secularization of knowledge and this in turn permitted the growth of the physical sciences and the development of that luxuriant technology which carried industrialism to the corners of the earth. By the nineteenth century the cash nexus was everywhere apparent. The cultural mosaic was cemented in gold. The dictum attributed to Guizot, *Enrichissez-vous, messieurs,* was the summation of an era.

This is, without doubt, an oversimplification; yet it is true in the main. The political protection accorded property through the common law and middle-class control of parliamentary institutions together with a developing technology, permitted an enormous expansion of capitalism. This led in turn to a social order exceedingly dynamic, in which the doctrine of progress appeared to be no more than a literal translation of everyday experience. The Victorians, by and large, came honestly by their optimism, and if a few statesmen, like Joseph Chamberlain in England, or a few critics, like Emerson in America, caught glimpses of a more dismal future, they, like Marx and Henry George, were exceptions in their century. It was a period of unequalled material advancement and that fact cast an aura over all institutions. It bathed them in a shimmering light which produced an illusion of permanence as though the pinnacle of social evolution had at last been reached. Even as late as 1907, J. Allen Smith, in *The Spirit of American Government,* could write as though democracy unquestionably rode the wave of the future and not until 1940 did a popular American argue that the case might be otherwise.

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[2]This is, of course, an actual inversion, since property is not a thing but a right established by law. In this connection one need only to refer to the status of the Southern Negro before and after the Civil War. *Cf.* Huntington Carnes, *Law and the Social Sciences* (London, 1935).

To be sure, Adam Smith had long before suggested that the "affluence of the rich" might some day "excite the indignation of the poor," who would thus be led to "invade" the possessions of the wealthy. That process had, indeed, been coexistent with the material expansion and had proceeded in recognizable stages. First, the masses pressed for a share in political power on the basis of the same democratic ideas earlier wielded by the middle classes. Then, having succeeded in broadening the social base of the state, they used their bargaining position to force material concessions. It is in the light of this process that social legislation is to be primarily understood. For democracy, as J. Allen Smith long ago pointed out, is among other things a scheme for the redistribution of wealth. It is that which gives content to abstract notions of equality. The masses, like the commercial classes before them, demand control of the state "to the end that the product of industry may be equitably distributed."

In an expanding economy such a potentiality is of slight concern to the barons of industry and commerce. The demands of the people grow slowly and the rate of material expansion is more than adequate to meet them without producing any of that "levelling" always so repugnant to the members of a ruling class. Indeed, up to the first World War, the rate of material expansion was sufficiently great to permit the accumulation of unprecedented private fortunes at the same time that mass living-standards were slowly rising. Under such circumstances there was, as Gouverneur Morris had clearly foreseen, little danger to the propertied interest from democracy. "Give the votes to people who have no property," he argued in the Constitutional Convention, "and they will sell them to the rich, who will be able to buy them."[3] In a more subtle fashion Joseph Chamberlain and Lord Balfour argued in England that the extension of the social services was the best prophylaxis against socialism—a conclusion which Bismarck had reached before them.

The point to be emphasized from all this is, perhaps, an obvious one. It is that throughout the nineteenth century and into the twentieth, technology, capitalism, and democracy were all dynamic forces contributing to a society of movement. Each developed by extension and each contributed to the growth of the others. But their rates of development were in no wise equal. The technical means of production outran the institutions of capi-

[3] *Elliot's Debates,* vol. 1, p. 386.

talism and produced the paradox of poverty in the midst of plenty. The expansion of capitalism proceeded more rapidly than that of democracy and led to imperialism abroad and industrial feudalism at home. Moreover, the potential areas of expansion were not equally great in the three instances. The limits of technological development were so remote as to seem unimportant, while those of democratic growth lay hidden in the distant future. But the probable limits of economic expansion through existing institutional forms were already apparent in 1904 when Veblen published *The Theory of Business Enterprise* with its remarkable final chapter on the natural decay of business. Those limits were rooted in the essentials of the individualist profit system and had come clearly into view in Europe even before the first World War. Indeed, it may be argued that their perception by the statesmen of Germany and England contributed largely to the war itself.

In the United States we continued to believe what we had learned to believe until the crash of 1929-30.[4] We were certain that our economy would continue to expand indefinitely even when it was shown that we were already dumping a considerable share of our production by means of the export of capital. We continued to speak of free competition when in fact monopolistic competition had in large measure replaced it. We gave continued lip-service to the doctrine of governmental *laissez faire* while moving steadily in the direction of state capitalism. Such contradictions were personified in the unhappy Mr. Hoover, whose doctrine of rugged individualism reached out to embrace the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. Even today, people persist in speaking as though we had suffered merely a temporary lapse in the functioning of our economy, while every evidence suggests that we have come to the end of an era. This is a matter which should be more widely understood. For regardless of the outcome of the present war, there is no possibility of a return to the individualistic economy of an earlier day. That, too, has gone with the wind. It was destroyed neither by Mr. Roosevelt nor by the radicals, but by the scientists and engineers. It withered away at the roots. For the price structure as a whole can be maintained at a profitable level only when effective

[4] "Future historians," it has been said, "may well regard the nineteenth century in America as having ended in the year 1929."—S. M. Rosen and L. Rosen, *Technology and Society* (New York, 1941), p. 448.

demand exceeds supply, while the essential nature of the machine process is to produce a plethora of goods.

I do not propose in this essay to analyze in any detail the bases of the world-wide economic collapse or to discuss those aspects of the profit system which make any further expansion of individualist capitalism improbable. In recent years they have provoked a considerable and sometimes enlightening literature. Suffice it to say here that since the first World War the economy of the West has been slowing down and that since 1930 it has been actually contracting. This is a matter of fact, not of opinion. Nor is it changed in any fundamental way by state-subsidized booms in armaments. The simple fact is that the limits of economic expansion under an unrestricted system of private exploitation have for some time been overrun, while the technological means of production have continued to improve.

We have not yet realized the portentous implications of this development. The contraction of capitalism at a time when technology and democracy are still in expansive phases subjects the social order to an intolerable wrenching. It produces that acute disequilibrium from which the Western world is suffering at the present time and it portends a revolutionary situation. For there are two principal possibilities of restoring unity to the social structure and both involve fundamental changes in the economic and political foundations of the modern world. On the one hand, we can arrest the progress of democracy and technology (as applied to normal processes of production), reverting to autarchy, a neomercantilism, and a society of status. This is the meaning of the Italian and German counter-revolutions. Or we can shape economic institutions adequate to the machine age and restore equilibrium by reconstituting the social order on dynamic bases. This is the promise of some form of democratic collectivism. The alternatives are state capitalism and dictatorship or socialism and democracy.

What I am suggesting is that, under the impact of technology, social evolution has proceeded to a point where monopoly capitalism and democracy represent divergent tendencies. The economic and the political foundations of society are once more thrusting in opposed directions, as they were in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This, as Professor Laski has emphasized, is the central contradiction in the modern state. For a contracting economy cannot long continue to support the existing level of

profits without at the same time reducing the scale of mass benefits either by means of wage reductions or through a decrease in the social services. Either alternative, if acted upon, will lead to a further contraction of the economy and in turn to additional reductions of benefit.

It is obvious that such constrictive policies will be vigorously resisted by the trade unions and by the mass of the people, who will attempt to use their democratic political power to reduce profits instead. But the capitalist system will not operate in the absence of profits or of their reasonable expectations, and such an effort, therefore, points inexorably toward collectivism. At this level, then, the issue is joined. The masses will acquiesce in the reduction of benefits only if their political power in the form of democratic institutions has first been destroyed, while the revolutionary implications of democracy become increasingly apparent to the proprietary classes.

As a matter of fact, political democracy has always had revolutionary implications. On that point even Hamilton and Jefferson were agreed. But those implications were long obscured by the maximization of privilege which accompanied a rapidly expanding economy. In the absence of such expansion the conflicting interests of *rentier* and worker emerge starkly and the struggle for state power becomes an expression of that fact. These are the only terms in which the history of the past twenty years becomes intelligible. Moral collapse there has been, but it has come in the face of a threat to privilege. Such is the lesson of Spain, and Norway, and France.

In the light of this analysis a number of conclusions emerge. First, it is apparent that the world as we have known it is a dying one to which it is futile to cling, however much we may wish to do so. Spengler and the dictators are right at least in their charge that the "pluto-democracies" are decadent. For the levelling force of the machine transforms privilege into industrial and social sabotage. Indeed, as Mr. Mumford has eloquently indicated, avarice and privilege today become "in effect if not in intention treason."

What the dictators fail to emphasize is that fascism is even more thoroughly decadent. It represents, in the first instance at any rate, the efforts of the privileged to maintain their positions through the destruction of all democratic institutions: representative government, the trade unions, freedom of expression, liberal education, an objective science. These facts are not changed by pointing out that in practice the fascist leaders soon

constitute themselves the only privileged class in the state. The ultimate fate of Herr Thyssen in no sense alters the historical fact that Hitler came to power with his support. Nor should his exile be taken to mean, as it has in some quarters, that Germany is moving toward socialism. All that has happened is that the original proprietors have, in some cases, been expropriated by a new group of robber barons, of whom General Goering and Dr. Goebbels are the prototypes. The techniques by which this was accomplished would not have seemed wholly foreign to Jay Gould or even to the elder Rockefeller.

A second conclusion which emerges from this analysis is that we must choose, and choose now, what it is in our social system that we wish to defend. Such a decision is less difficult to make than appears on the surface. We cannot, it seems evident, preserve an individualistic economy. We cannot, even if we wish to do so, preserve the pattern of privilege as it exists at present. Even to attempt that will lead to fascism, as it has over Europe; and fascism produces its own pattern of privilege grounded in terror. What we must wish to defend, therefore, is democracy and we must view every measure of defense in the light of its contribution to that end.

But democracy cannot survive unless it again becomes militant. To live is to grow and that which is alive will expand. On this score the democrat is especially fortunate. No other slogan on earth has the compulsive power of *Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité,* though its strength has in the past been sapped by those who would confine its meaning within the strait jacket of a system of privilege. Such confinement is no longer feasible. The revolutionary force which will destroy fascism is already "moving in the womb of democracy and creating a vast discomfort," as Dorothy Thompson says in her able introduction to M. W. Fodor's *The Revolution Is On.* We must give scope to that creative dynamic if we are to defeat fascism and to save what is worth saving in our culture. For, in the political sphere no less than in the physical, "a moving body opposed to a static body of the same weight will overtopple it."

III

It is sometimes suggested, even by those who should know better, that democracy and capitalism are inseparable. But this is clearly to mistake historical association for contingency. To say that capitalism and po-

litical democracy arose together is not to indicate a causal relationship, but merely to describe one period of European history. "What democracy has been is by no means exhaustive of what it could be, and is certainly not what it ought to be."[5]

Still, this notion of relationship is sufficiently widespread to require comment. It is, moreover, another of those interesting ideas which extremists both of the Right and of the Left cherish in common. Thus, the eminent American Fascist, Mr. Lawrence Dennis, employs the evident collapse of competitive capitalism to establish the decadence of democracy.[6] At the other extreme, the Communists, with all the finality of seventeenth century Jesuits, solemnly repeat the famous remark of Lenin that democracy is the ideal political shell of capitalism, and leave it at that. I might point out, also, that such doctrine would not sound strange in many Chambers of Commerce nor ring falsely in the ears of the secretariat of the National Association of Manufacturers. Indeed, the latter organization would apparently found social science textbooks on this error.

But democracy is certainly far more than the political tool of the middle class or, for that matter, of the proletariat. It is, in its larger manifestations, a philosophy and a way of life which embraces the whole pattern of humanism. Its basis, as A. N. Whitehead has indicated in *Modes of Thought,* is "the common fact of value experience, as constituting the essential nature of each pulsation of actuality." Its aim, as John Dewey has consistently emphasized, "is forever that of a freer and more humane experience in which all share and to which all contribute." Historically, therefore, democracy antedates either capitalism or the *bourgeoisie* by centuries. Throughout the ages it has been the ideal goal of mankind.

It is important, I think, that we understand the twin pillars upon which democracy as a system of values rests. One of these is ethical, the other rationalistic. The democratic process has always had its roots deeply buried in ethical considerations, as well as in economic ones. It was so at the time of the Greeks and it was so in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when the revival of individualism provided the propulsive force

[5]James Feibleman, *Positive Democracy* (University of North Carolina Press, 1940), p.x. This book is a stimulating contribution to democratic thought from the point of view of a philosophic realist.

[6]*The Coming American Fascism* (New York, 1936); *The Dynamics of War and Revolution* (New York, 1940).

for its rebirth. The ethical basis of democracy is a belief in the importance and integrity of the individual personality. The democratic process rests upon the assumption that individuals ought to be regarded as ends and not as means, and it is this belief alone which leads to the view that the highest purpose of organized society is the welfare of its members.

But such an ethical faith is not of itself sufficient to support a democratic structure. It can lead, as indeed it did, to the welfare totalitarianism of the Roman Church in the days of its supremacy. It was the concept of skepticism, re-enforced by the revolutionary discoveries of science, which transformed that totalitarianism into the tolerant democracy of more recent times. Only when it was clearly seen that truth was relative and that it frequently originated in a minority of one, or, as Sidney Hook has put it, that "there may be common interests, but the conceptions of the common interest are never common"—only when the advance of knowledge had forced these ideas upon the human mind was democracy justified on rationalistic grounds as well as upon ethical.

Now it should be pointed out briefly that the practical effect of both the ethical and the rationalistic emphases is the same. If a man's experience is to count, he must be able to state it freely or to join with other like-minded people in order to give it effect. Only under such conditions can he express his individual personality and only under such circumstances can the rest of us comprising a society be certain that we are not being denied an important truth. For there is more than the description of an historical fact in the motto *E Pluribus Unum*. The strength of democracy springs from diversity and not from what Professor Perry has termed "uniformitarianism." (The word is as monstrous as its referent.)

It is not my purpose to undertake in this essay a definitive analysis of democracy. That would require far more space than is at my disposal. But it must be evident, as Sidney Hook has emphasized in *Reason, Social Myths, and Democracy*, that "democracy is an affirmation of certain attitudes and values which are more important than any particular set of institutions, because those attitudes and values must serve as the sensitive directing controls of institutional change." The point is important, for upon it hinges the solution of the thorny problem of the relation of means to ends in the defense of democracy. If we are to preserve what we think we are preserving, the means selected must be harmonious with these underlying directive norms. There should be no mistake about that. It must

be apparent in these days of protective custodies that attack often comes in the guise of defense. Indeed, skepticism about means is more important today than it was in 1917 when Bourne was writing *The War and the Intellectuals*. But there is little of it.

It is, for example, argued by Professor Perry among others that "the enemy who takes the initiative can select the weapons" and that this places us "under the hard necessity" of employing the same weapons for defense.[7] But surely this is too simple, even though there is a sense in which it is true. I should not, for instance, undertake to argue that Mahatma Gandhi's campaign of passive resistance would be effective against Hitler's panzer divisions. That would certainly be unrealistic. But there is another sense in which Professor Perry's dictum is profoundly false and infinitely pernicious. It is not necessary to fight terror with terror, persecution with persecution, or authoritarianism with authoritarianism. Indeed, in these terms, the whole argument begins to crumble. Nor is it as simple as he apparently believes to safeguard our souls while soiling our hands.

It is customary at this point in the debate to refer to the lessons of history and to suggest that the war totalitarianism of 1917-18 passed without leaving a mark on our democracy. But I do not think this is true. The 1920's were, it seems to me, the most profoundly antidemocratic years in American history and I should not except even the corrupt decades that followed the Civil War. Surely it is not a matter of chance that the gap between the New Freedom and the scandals of the Harding Administration is bridged by the war years; or that those same years saw the beginning of the process by which the promise of American life was translated in terms of the two-car garage. It is not difficult, for me at least, to associate some of the means by which democracy was then defended with the revival of vigilantism in the guise of the Ku Klux Klan and of one hundred per cent Americanism; or with the lawless violence rampant in those years; or with the enhanced reputability of industrial espionage and the emergence of the new business ethics. The relationships seem obvious enough. Nor should it be forgotten that the outstanding intellectual figure of the '20's was Mr. H. L. Mencken, whose views of democracy stemmed directly from Nietzsche and whose contempt for the people would have found favor with Alexander Hamilton.

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[7]Ralph Barton Perry, *Shall Not Perish from the Earth* (New York, 1940).

The point that I wish to emphasize would have seemed obvious to progressive thinkers a few years back. It is that there is a definite relationship between the means we employ and the ends we achieve. We cannot, without grave danger, employ totalitarian means for democratic ends. Nor is it necessary that we should do so. The weapons chosen by the adversary limit those available for practicable defense, but they do not determine them.

As a matter of fact, means and ends are integral parts of a single process. The concept of process is important, for the confusion in thought on this subject arises from a tendency to view either means or ends as passive, when they are both in fact dynamic. Thus it is suggested by some that means are neutral and that they take their color only from the end toward which they are directed; that there are no means peculiar to democracy or to totalitarianism, but that they are interchangeable. Such a position contradicts the whole experience of mankind. Moreover, in practice it makes the judgment of means contingent upon guesses as to the intentions of those who are employing them—an intolerable situation in a democracy.

On the other hand, an equally extreme position results from a concentration upon means as the only active agents in the social process. This is the position of the moral purist and of some pacifists at the present time, and it, too, seems to be contradicted by experience. It is only partially true that we have to judge ends by means, just as the reverse is only partially true. The mad surgeon who commits a murder may employ many of the same means as are used for the preservation of life. His techniques have not changed, but his goal. In the same way, cannon may be used offensively or defensively and it is a misreading of history to argue that in the long run they are always used for either one or the other.

Means and ends are as inseparable as body and mind. The analogy seems a good one because, while inseparable, they are not in any meaningful sense identical. Thus it is true that, within limits, the end does justify the means and it is equally true that, within limits, the choice of means predetermines the character of the end. What should be stressed in this proposition are the limits and it is their proper identification in each instance which will be determinate of social direction.

What, then, are the proper means for the defense of democracy? This is obviously a large question and I shall have to reserve the bill of

particulars to another article. But the choice of means must obviously be undertaken in the light of the fundamental values of democracy, as well as of the objective situation. It is not enough to permit the adversary to choose the weapons. Such a tactic, indeed, will almost surely spell disaster. For not only will he select those weapons in the use of which he is most proficient, but he will overlook weapons of enormous importance to us.

What I am arguing is that we have at hand a weapon which no authoritarian can hope to match: the dynamic force of an expanding democracy. What I am suggesting is that we must use it. For if analysis of the social crisis means anything it is that fascism can be defeated only by pressing forward with democracy. This is true because of the fundamental character of the world crisis and because we confront not only an external enemy, but one strongly entrenched within the gates as well. Here lies the crux of the matter and in this respect our situation today is far different than it was in 1916. Fascism, it is true, must be destroyed in the world, but it can be defeated on the home front only by social progress. Democracy can be saved today only if it is rapidly extended. Even a temporary contraction may easily prove disastrous, externally as well as internally. For men are no longer willing to die for the perpetuation of a system of privilege. They will be valiant only where their own aspirations are engaged.

It follows from this that large-scale social reform must proceed hand in hand with the accumulation of material means of defense. The solution of our pressing social problems is too intimately related to the maintenance of the democratic pattern to await the hypothetical relaxation of external pressures. A standing army is no adequate answer to the problems of youth, nor an armament boom to that of unemployment. We are not going to preserve democracy, whatever else we save, by curtailing the social services today and guaranteeing profits. Nor is Mr. Mumford's new spartanism the answer. What is obviously demanded is a Third New Deal on a scale sufficient to dwarf its predecessors. Unless we now press forward to social and economic democracy we shall soon have little to defend.

Those who argue that such a program as I am suggesting would be impractical because it would be sabotaged by business are implying that American businessmen as a whole have already chosen the antidemocratic alternative. I do not think this is true; but if it is, the American people should know it. This is no time to be uncertain as to where our leaders

stand, or to be following them blindly. Indeed, as Professor Hook has argued, intelligent distrust of leadership is today a positive necessity for the operation of democracy. Such distrust may irritate those leaders "who are convinced of their good intentions," but the skepticism is "not of their intentions but of the objective consequences of their power."

In another connection Professor Laski has emphasized a related point. We must clearly understand, he says, that democratic procedures can be safely operated only by men whose belief in them is not open to dispute. The point has been underscored by the sorry succession of events in Europe. Betrayal has become a habit of ruling classes. It is not democracy that is weak. It is not democracy that is suffering from dry rot. Those are the present-day characteristics of privilege.

Finally, it should be re-emphasized that we cannot safely employ again many of the procedures and techniques used in previous war situations. We cannot, for example, outlaw the strike, or impair the right of association, or restrict freedom of criticism. The totalitarian potential inherent in such means is antithetical to the extension of democracy and thus, under present conditions, to its defense. Our strength cannot lie in any artificially produced national unity, but in that more profound fraternity which springs from a unification of diversity through the expression of common aspirations. The creation of such a unity calls for statesmanship of a high order. It means an end to drifting and the enunciation of a program which combines clear-cut domestic goals with specific war aims. Such a program is the weapon for which we are searching. Properly conceived it would prove even more invincible than did Wilson's Fourteen Points, and everyone knows that they were worth an army.

Now that we are involved in this war let us, like Randolph Bourne, call for it to be "gallantly played, with insistent care for democratic values at home, and unequivocal alliance with democratic elements abroad for a peace that should promise more than a mere union of benevolent imperialisms." If we succeed in this we shall indeed have successfully defended the culture of the West.

WAR AIMS

By HENRY G. ALSBERG

THE STRUGGLE at the present moment in this country is not between groups advocating the British cause and other groups favoring victory for the Nazis. There is practical unanimity among us as to who is the villain of the current European struggle, and that villain is, by almost universal agreement, Nazi Germany, and, to a lesser degree, Fascist Italy. The struggle is between those who advocate all-out aid to Britain, even at peril of our being dragged into the war, and those who, determined to keep us out of war at all costs, are trying to limit our aid to Britain as much as possible, and deflect our resources toward making America self-sufficient in defense. Meanwhile, war aims are scarcely discussed at all, protagonists of both points of view being entirely absorbed in the immediate contest. The all-out-aid-for-Britain forces try to avoid discussion of this subject entirely and restrict their statements to pointing out the obvious need for defeating the Axis power regardless of all other considerations. It is true, the President has given the nation a few vague and altruistic objectives in his four-point program for the post-war world. The English statesmen won't even go as far as that. Mr. Churchill recently justified his refusal to keep his promise and state British war aims to Parliament, with the rather offhand remark that everybody knew what Britain was fighting for; and Lord Halifax since his arrival in this country, has been equally cavalier in reference to this matter. And American advocates of all-out aid to Britain apparently have adopted the official British point of view. On the other side, the opponents of the President's program seem to use the issue of war objectives merely as a stalking horse to arouse latent American prejudices against British imperialism and as a source of embarrassment to the Administration.

To a certain extent, perhaps, reluctance to talk about war objectives now may be due to the fact that this subject has already been discussed between the Administration and Lord Halifax, and Mr. Churchill and Mr. Harry L. Hopkins. It seems quite likely that some statement will be forthcoming either from Mr. Churchill or the President, or both, now Mr. Hopkins has returned from England. However, it is too much to hope

that any such official utterance will really cover the many and complex issues that are bound to arise once the Axis powers are defeated. (And certainly any official statement and any discussion of war aims must assume defeat of the Nazis and Fascists.) The official mind, and in any case, the conservative traditions of our State Department, would be against any too detailed commitments in this connection. Whatever declaration is made, will, in all likelihood, have definite and immediate practical purposes: 1. To whip up American sentiment for all-out aid to Britain. (It is probably true that the maximum American effort to speed the arms production program cannot be attained except under considerable emotional pressure from the mass of our people.) 2. To placate that section of British public opinion which through the medium of the Labor Party and such publications as the London *New Statesman and Nation* and Harold Laski's recent book *Where Do We Go From Here?* has been demanding a clear statement of British war objectives. 3. To discredit entirely the Communists and other leftist organizations, apparently more powerful in England than in this country, which have been agitating in Britain for an end of the war through a negotiated peace. 4. To encourage the populations of Germany and Italy and the territories occupied or controlled by the Axis powers to oppose the war by passive resistance and even sabotage, and eventually to revolt. At best the statement will be restricted to generalizations about democracy, the rescue of oppressed peoples from Axis domination, the establishment of a more just social-economic order when the war is over and so forth. There may even be mention, altogether in a tentative vein, of a plan for a closer union between the English-speaking nations as the basis for a federation of the democratic world after the war is over.

But any more detailed blueprint of procedure to be followed when the slaughter is ended is scarcely to be expected. No governmental bureaucracy has sufficient belief in the democratic process to encourage the masses to discuss government's mistakes of the past, which have resulted in present disaster, and propose solutions which might involve condemnation of allies, curtailment of their demands and necessary readjustments for the benefit of nations classed as enemies. Such a frank statement, it would be feared, might weaken the popular will to victory. In this regard our own bureaucracy is probably no exception to the general rule. Yet if a really permanent settlement of the world is to take place at the end of

the war, it will be necessary that the British and American peoples be educated thoroughly by discussion of the problems that then will press for solution; otherwise even an Administration with the best intentions will be unable to realize its plans because of lack of support from the people back home. The lesson of the last post-war period should be ever present in the minds of our rulers.

Unfortunately the situation in the United States seems extremely unfavorable just now to the initiation of a debate on war objectives under pressure from the public itself. The cycle of opinion has made an almost complete revolution back to where it stood in 1918. Then, first under stimulus of a naive and ably propagandized press, exploiting to the limit Germany's invasion of Belgium, the sinking of the Lusitania and the subsequent unrestricted U-boat warfare, and later, under impact of propaganda put out by the official information service in Washington, hatred and war-hysteria had been whipped up to such a degree that sane discussion of the peace settlement, when President Wilson broached his fourteen points, was quite impossible. Moreover, American ignorance of all the issues involved, the minorities questions, the difficult economic problems, the impossibility of collecting fantastic reparations and so on left Mr. Wilson playing a lone hand at Versailles. Without any support from American public opinion, without any real British support, after Lloyd George's khaki election of 1919, he found himself the captive of his own too successful war propaganda at home. All he managed to rescue from the general peace debacle was the League of Nations. And the American people, suddenly disillusioned when they realized what the peace treaties in fact implied, insisted on complete withdrawal from European affairs and would not even back the League or have any part in it. Yet had we joined the League, it is possible that the history of the post-war era might have been quite different from what it actually turned out to be.

Followed a period of further disillusionment and skepticism as to the aims and ambitions of all the great imperialist powers, a state of mind that was accentuated by the reading of a long series of publications exposing the frank internationalism of the armaments manufacturers, the anarchic egoism of European nationalism, the lawlessness and brutality of the succession states—all of which convinced the American masses that the United States, if it did not wish to become a stooge of selfish particularist and armament interests, must cling to a policy of complete isolation.

The first important reaction to an earlier point of view came with the advent to power of Hitler and his persecution of the Jews. With each of Hitler's advances on the road of despotism, toward domination of Europe through violence, American sentiment became more hostile. With the outbreak of the war, practically our entire people were united in their hatred of Nazism and in the hope that the Axis would be defeated. Almost all sections of the population—liberals, Catholics, Jews, pacifists, groups of recent European extraction, believers in political democracy, Socialists—were united in the camp opposed to the Axis. With the increasing success of Hitler's arms, the passive attitude of these millions has been transformed into an active and hysterical fear of a complete Hitler victory. Only some pacifist organizations, the Communists, and some of the Socialists now oppose a program of aid to Britain.

On the whole, popular sentiment is much more unanimous against the Axis powers at present than it was against Germany as late even as 1917. In the fall of that year Morris Hillquit, running on what was largely an antiwar platform, received 150,000 votes in the New York mayoralty election, a vote equivalent to 300,000 today, since women weren't voting in 1917. This is more than all the antiwar parties combined received last fall in the presidential election. Later, of course, as the war progressed, and under stimulus of official propaganda, American public opinion reached phenomenal heights of war hysteria. As yet there has been no official propaganda agency to whip up popular sentiment and overcome opposition (which even now is almost nonexistent). Undoubtedly, when we get a little further along, such an agency will be set up in order to stimulate American "solidarity" in support of the all-out aid and defense program. There have recently been hints from Washington that steps in this direction are under consideration.

Meanwhile the familiar symptoms of a growing wave of hysteria are already to be observed. There is the Dies Committee propagating anti-Nazi and anti-Communist feeling and spyomania. In New York and other states legislative committees are getting into action against dissident elements. Criminal syndicalist laws and other legislation are being used or proposed for suppression of "un-Americanism." The machinery necessary for an unthinking and dangerous emotionalism is beginning to bear on the American people in an effort to rob them of their reason and plunge them into an emotional debauch. The current trend reminds one

strongly of the Mitchell Palmer red-baiting orgy of 1919-21.

This time our liberals and intellectuals (not always synonymous terms) are almost unanimous for an all-out and defeat-the-Axis program, without thought of "what then" when these ends shall have been attained. *The Nation,* which during the last war just missed losing its mailing privileges because of opposition to our entry into the war, now has adopted the "beat the Axis first and do your thinking afterward" platform. *The New Republic,* under the spur of some of its readers, has approached the question of war aims, but in a vague, uncertain, and gingerly fashion. Representatives of the most liberal administration group have nothing to say about war aims; Archibald MacLeish, who has become more or less the ambassador of the White House to the liberals and intellectuals, chides American writers for having disillusioned American youth by a too harsh exposure of the cracks and flaws in our present social and international organization—to such an extent, indeed, that youth's will to act (in the sense, no doubt, of unquestioning acceptance of the Administration's war program) has been dangerously impaired. The accusation sounds strangely like Nazi and Fascist criticisms of democracy.

Everywhere the cry, increasingly vehement, is heard of "beat the Axis first and postpone discussion of the peace settlement till afterwards." The sentiment, it must be admitted, receives constant re-enforcement from Hitler's successes, and from the prospect that, unless we do go all out in aid to Britain, he will be victorious—when any hope of a decent peace will, of course, have evaporated in thin air.

In this atmosphere of urgency and apprehension it may seem fantastic to press for any immediate declaration of war aims. Yet, on reflection, the need for discussion of these objectives and the outlining of a pretty detailed program for world settlement, after Hitler is defeated, must appear almost as imperative as the mobilization of our physical forces for victory. Preparedness for peace is as vital as preparedness for war; the penalty for being caught unprepared will be a repetition of the mistakes, but this time with far more serious consquences, made in 1919 and the post-war period. The problems to be solved this time are of a much more complex and intricate nature, and the condition of Europe, when the time to solve them arrives, will be much more chaotic and full of danger to civilization than in 1919.

Not only our own people must be educated to support a sane and well-thought-through program of world settlement, but, what is even more important, our rulers must be forced to think definitely and in detail about the peace problems so as to be equipped to face the crisis of peace. Mr. Wilson was a scholar deeply versed in European political, social, and economic history. But even he, as it turned out, had thought along too superficial lines, especially in the field of self-determination of nationalities, so that his insistence, in the midst of an impossible economic set-up, on self-determination of racial groups as a complete basis for the fixing of political and economic boundaries turned Middle Europe into a bear garden for fanatical excesses.

It is doubtful whether our State Department has advanced even as far as Mr. Wilson in its conceptions of what the peace should be like; and the easy generalizations of our President with regard to establishment of civil liberties, freedom from fear, and economic well-being everywhere can only alarm those who are apprehensive that the battle for an equitable peace will be fought with the antiquated weapons used at the last peace conference. The American people should be urged to demand that there be discussion of specific problems now and that solutions be agreed to by actual pledges from their rulers and the rulers of Great Britain. A blueprint of the peace settlement should be drawn up and agreed to and published while there is still time and before pressure of a Europe starving and on the brink of chaos forces the conclusion of a hasty and unjust settlement that will bear within it the seeds of new conflicts. In this connection it should be recalled that the Versailles conference of 1919 worked under the constant spur of the time factor. While diplomats were trying to outline the settlement, Europe itself seemed to be falling to pieces, till at last it was said by even the most foresighted of the delegates that any peace at all, even a pernicious peace, was better, so long as it was concluded quickly, than a juster but long-delayed settlement.

The reluctance of bureaucracy and governmental authorities to be open and frank with the people they govern and their conservatism and unwillingness to enter into what, no doubt, seem to them impractical and purely theoretical discussions, only in part explain why neither British nor American political leaders have broached the subject of war aims with any seriousness or in any detail. An important motive for their silence has to be sought elsewhere; chiefly in their fear that a frank dis-

cussion will expose some of the inconsistencies and contradictions of their own position. Embarrassing questions might be asked and have to be answered. Are we fighting to restore a Poland that bitterly oppressed its minorities, Jews included, suppressed civil liberties, was, in short, a corrupt and cruel dictatorishp? Are we fighting to take away the Polish Ukraine and White Russia from the Soviet Union and restore them to Poland? Do we intend to fight Russia to attain these or other ends, after we have cleaned up Hitler? Are we aiding the Greeks to annex Albania and do to the Albanians what the Italians did to them? Greece, it must be remembered, at least until Metaxas' death, was a dictatorship too. All Central Europe bristled with injustices and wrongs even before Hitler took hold. Are we aiding Britain to beat Hitler merely to restore the chaos that existed there before his arrival? And on what basis are we helping Franco (if we are helping him, as is alleged, by direct wheat shipments and by loaning Argentina money so that she can supply him with the food without which he probably would have to face a popular revolt and overthrow)? There are a multitude of such questions which would be asked, once the floodgates of a frank discussion were opened.

The dilemma in which we, on the democratic side of the war, find ourselves, is due to the fact that we refuse to be open and aboveboard, for fear, I suppose, of losing allies and the support of various particularist groups—and for fear of weakening the will to victory of our own peoples if they are informed that there were wrongs, injustices, and stupidities on our side which have, as much as anything else, been responsible for Nazism and its onslaught on civilization. There is a way out of this dilemma, if we are willing to take it with complete honesty and openness. And this way calls for an immediate general statement that must be preliminary to further discussion of peace aims. We must declare that we are not willing to buy the temporary and at best uncertain privilege of isolation through restoration of the *status quo ante,* the return of Europe and the rest of the world to where it was when Hitler first came to power in 1933. Such a settlement might mean a precarious and tentative peace for us; for Britain it would mean an even more dangerous repetition of years of corrupt jugglery to maintain a balance of power, inevitably leading to a world conflagration. It would imply a punitive peace as far as Germany was concerned, a peace much more drastic than that of Versailles, if Germany were to be prevented for any considerable time from recuper-

ating and again taking her revenge. It would mean racial, social, and economic chaos in Middle and Eastern Europe, and an uncertain peace in Eastern Asia. Such a settlement is of course unthinkable, and we must disavow any intention of perpetrating it.

In its place we must offer a totally different kind of peace, one which shall be acceptable to European and Asiatic peoples, one which will promise them justice for their legitimate national-cultural aspirations and at the same time an economic organization capable of giving them economic security. The British Empire and the United States will at the same time have to offer sacrifices of no inconsiderable scope in order to accomplish a just reorganization of the world: both of them in the way of granting free-trade concessions; both of them in the way of granting free access to their unpeopled acres for European and Asiatic surplus populations; Britain by giving up exploitation of her subject races and submitting to a program for rule of these races designed to prepare them for self-government at the earliest moment. All the nations, imperialist, industrial and agricultural, will have to be drawn into this new order. There should be no idea of excluding any nation from this program, no matter what its internal political organization. Political democracy as the test for membership in the new order, an idea advanced by Clarence Streit in *Union Now* and supported by W. B. Curry in his *The Case for Federal Union* and by American and British liberal groups, would exclude two-thirds of the world, both by area and population, even if we assume that a post-war Germany will turn once more toward democracy. Germany, Soviet Russia, and Japan will have to be part of the new order. And all, in one direction or another, will have to contribute sacrifices in various ways so that the new order can be realized.

A general statement embodying these ideas, would go far in gaining for Britain and the United States support of the peoples that now remain doubtful of the sincerity of the two English-speaking countries. America would gain real support in South America. Soviet Russia and Japan might be won over. The gains, indeed, would far outweigh the loss of support of the little fanatical particularist groups and nationalities. The offer by the two surviving democracies to contribute substantial sacrifices will lend the quality of sincerity to the declaraion. Britain, as a proof of its sincerity, might be called upon, as Harold Laski has suggested, to state at once when and how India is to be given her freedom. Such a general declaration as

that proposed will stimulate vehement discussion among our peoples and tend toward clarification of motives and objectives and in the end will doubtless enlist the enthusiastic support of the masses in both democracies more surely than an hysterical hush-hush policy.

A general declaration of this kind, if our governments cannot be persuaded to make it, should be drawn up by some group of liberal-minded citizens. And to the general declaration should be annexed a syllabus of the problems that will have to be solved if the general idea put forward is to be realized. In an article of limited length, only suggestions can be made as to what the problems are that have to be discussed and only tentative solutions offered. Here is a short-hand list of them:

I. Reorganization of Middle Europe, with cultural autonomy for all its component racial groups, but economic unity from the Baltic to the Adriatic and the Aegean seas, and from the French to the Russian frontier. The Danube, the Rhine, the Oder, and the Elbe would be the connecting lines of transportation of this union. This plan involves restoration to Germany of all German-speaking peoples, with the possible exception of Alsace. Soviet Russia retains Polish Ukraine and White Russia, Bessarabia and the three Baltic states she has already annexed. Polish Ukraine and White Russia belong racially to the Soviet Union, which, whatever else may be said of her, at any rate permits cultural autonomy to her component nationalities. The three Baltic states are dependent on Russian economy for their very existence. Middle Europe will be united in a customs union, which, whether we like it or not, will be under German leadership. (Unless of course Germany is to be dismembered.)

II. Pooling of subject-race colonies under the supervision of an international agency and their government for the benefit of their inhabitants, and preparation for proximate self-government. Britain to declare at once its intention of establishing a self-governing India by a given date.

III. Pooling of raw materials and food resources, making them freely accessible to all nations; ending of all monopolies in these raw materials. This question of raw materials becomes less pressing with the advance of scientific research, which is constantly inventing satisfactory substitutes for them.

IV. Establishment of free trade at the earliest possible moment, with due regard to differing standards of living and disruption of national economies.

V. Arrangements for international trade based on some other medium of exchange than that of gold, which is at present monopolized by a few nations, until such time at least as the gold monopoly shall have been broken down.

VI. Settlement of European and Asiatic displaced populations, which cannot be returned to their old homes or do not want to return, in countries that have a surplus of land: Canada, the United States, Brazil, Australia, and Africa. Again, this problem is a temporary one. Falling birth-rates and increase of productivity through technological developments will eventually make the surplus-population countries able to sustain their peoples within their own boundaries.

VII. Universal disarmament by victors, vanquished, and neutrals.

VIII. A program for world reconstruction. A great part of Europe, at any rate, will have been devastated by the war. Starvation and disease will have become endemic. This will happen to even a greater degree than after the last war, when starvation drove Europe to the brink of chaos. Prompt action will be needed to relieve the immediate needs of, and to rehabilitate, the devastated and war-stricken areas. The United States, using its millions that will have dropped out of the armaments industries, will have to supply the raw and semi-finished materials, and Europe, using its demobilized soldiers and war industry workers, will have to do the actual work of reconstruction. Unless a detailed program is worked out beforehand and an organization gotten in readiness to act promptly, the post-war crisis in Europe may have unforetellable and dangerous consequences.

IX. The program outlined of course involves a policy of "no reparations and no annexations."

X. The whole plan outlined assumes that some new society of nations will be formed to carry out the provisions of the world settlement. In fact a cardinal point of the plan would be that the peace would be dictated not by the victor nations but by the whole society of nations called together to sit at the peace table. Any real settlement is unthinkable otherwise, not only because of the complexity and difficulty of the arrangements that will have to be made and because of the fact that all nations will be involved in the settlement, but also because many of the arrangements arrived at will, in their very nature, be temporary and need constant change and adjustment. Protection of minorities, for instance, will for

years be a continuing function of a new League of Nations, until, indeed, the nations of the world have become accustomed to the new conception of the separation of cultural from political rights. The old League in failing to give adequate protection to minorities left the way open for destructive irredentism. Supervision of colonial administration, access to raw materials, resettlement and immigration, international trade agreements, the reconstruction program, disarmament—all these provisions of the settlement imply intervention and control and supervision by a world agency.

The dispute will center, not around the question as to whether a world agency is necessary, but what the character of that agency is to be. Much of the recent theorizing on the problem has been in favor of a federation of all the nations of the world, the federation to be modelled on our own Union, and to involve wide sacrifice of sovereignty by the component nations. The failure of the old League of Nations is pointed to as sufficient argument against a confederation of sovereign states. But when faced with the practical details of a true federal union, Streit and Curry and the other advocates of "Union Now" realize that such a union would be possible only for the so-called democratic states, that is to say the states with political and economic organizations of identical or related types. Originally Streit included, with the English-speaking countries, Eire, Holland, Belgium, France, Switzerland, the Scandinavian countries, and Finland. Since Nazi occupation of most of the non-English-speaking countries of this group (with the exception of Finland, now said to be dominated by Russia), the "Union Now" advocates for the present restrict the proposed federation to the English-speaking nations with admission to other nations when and if they adopt democratic political institutions inclusive of civil liberties. The federation idea has everything to recommend it; unfortunately, less than one-third of the habitable globe and even less of the world's population would be eligible for membership. Even if the American people could be persuaded to give up their independence and hitch up with the British Empire—and this is more than doubtful—the federation would be merely an Anglo-Saxon body, with a few small, non-Anglo-Saxon adjuncts, trying to enforce its will upon the rest of the world. Soviet Russia, the Japanese Empire, Germany, Italy, Spain, the Balkans, and most of South America would remain outside such a union.

Clearly a federal union, even if the membership requirements were relaxed considerably, is still a Utopian ideal, something not to be realized in the immediate future. A transition period is needed, during which the nations of the world will get used to a restricted amount of supervision and control, eventually to arrive at a point where they will be willing to surrender additional sections of their sovereignty.

Meanwhile, the best that can be hoped for is a strengthened and more strongly implemented League of Nations. Those who scorn the old League as ineffective, it seems to me, do not understand the real reasons for the League's failure. In the first place, it was loaded up with the hateful task of carrying out a destructive peace treaty, which it had no hand in drawing up. It was a peace treaty that most of the neutrals as well as the defeated nations (including in this list Russia and Italy) disliked and disbelieved in. In the second place, the victor nations, through the Conference of Ambassadors, operating independently of the League, kept Europe in a constant state of turmoil for years by a policy of blockade of, and intervention in, Russia; encouragement of aggressions by the newly created states; arming of the new states in order to menace both Russia and Germany; fomenting of war between Greece and Turkey; turning the plebiscites provided for by the peace treaties into a farce; strangulation of Austria and condoning oppression of minorities. It was inevitable that under these circumstances the prestige of the League should have suffered greatly. In the third place, the United States, which might have been a strong influence in pushing the League in the direction of righting the wrongs perpetrated by Versailles, refused to join and left the League to become, more or less, the creature of the victorious powers, England and France. In the fourth place, both Germany and Russia were excluded from the League for such a long time that, when they entered, the character of the League as a cover for diplomatic moves in the balance-of-power game had already been established. Had the League been given a workable plan to administer, and had the United States, Russia, and Germany been members from the beginning, it is not at all sure that many of the stupidities and injustices embodied in the treaties might not have been peaceably rectified. Certainly, for one thing, it would not have been impossible to bring about disarmament of the victor nations to match the

enforced disarmament of Germany and so to have avoided the eventual Nazi rearmament.

It follows, therefore, if the League is to be at all successful, it must become the treaty-making agency, when the war is over. That means that all the chief nations of the world will be seated at the peace table; that peace will not be dictated by the victors alone. The terms of the treaty will have to provide for disarmament. Soviet Russia, the United States, and even Japan will not oppose disarmament once they are assured of fair treatment in other matters. The program for European reconstruction will have to be launched at once under the League's auspices. And so on, down the line.

No nation will be asked to give up sovereignty except as the exigencies of the peace treaty make such sacrifice necessary. In this way a general surrender of sovereignty such as is contemplated by the "Unionists" will be avoided. Nations will be asked to surrender sovereignty only in certain limited directions and for definite purposes. Commissions will be set up by the League to carry out the provisions of the treaty; and many of these will have to be continuing commissions, acting over a period of years. Members of the League will have to yield up such sections of their sovereignty as are necessary properly to implement these League commissions. There will be a hundred and one details involved in the organization of the new League of Nations; but given a completely honest and aboveboard program, it is at least possible that the member nations will be willing to cooperate and give the League agencies such authority as they need. It must again be emphasized that the League will be administering a peace treaty to which all the chief nations will be parties and which they will, therefore, have an interest in carrying out.

At any rate, a League of Nations of the type outlined is the only one, in all likelihood, we shall be able to get. It is possible that the world can make this sort of League work for no longer than a decade. If at the end of such a period the union is not found to be sufficiently close, in view of its duties and responsibilities, enough public sentiment should have been created, through operation of the League over this length of time, to make possible its transformation into an organization more tightly knit. The advocates of world federation continually point to the ten years of the Confederation of the American colonies as a complete loss. Yet if the colonies had not had the experience of working together in this looser

organization, they would probably never have consented to join in a close union. The Confederation of the colonies was a necessary step that had to be taken before union could be achieved. So with the world union; it must be preceded by a confederation which eventually will, under pressure of public opinion, be transformed into a world union. At any rate, it is quite certain that a new and stronger version of the old League is all that we shall be able to get when this war is over.

THE INTELLECTUAL SOURCES OF FRENCH FASCISM

By HERMAN SCHNURER

THE Vichy *régime* presents a striking peculiarity. It can avail itself of an intellectual arsenal which no fascist or would-be fascist government could muster either in England or in the United States.

Relatively speaking, the English roster is short, even if one includes as precursors of fascism the recent opponents of democracy, the advocates of the leadership principle, of racial superiority, of reactionary clericalism or of aristocratic toryism. The names that come to mind call for careful qualification: Carlyle, Lecky, Belloc, Chesterton, Inge. I make no mention of H. S. Chamberlain, who is a German by culture and who labored hard to become a caricature. It is interesting to note that, with the exception of Carlyle's, there is no first-rate prestige in the whole group. Even Carlyle is a little hard to fit within the framework of brutalitarian doctrine. To be sure, he adored the Prussians, despised the Jews, extolled the virtues of the superman, defended slavery, and glorified the ideal of the human ant heap. But Carlyle is too close to his humanitarian contemporaries, too close, for example, to the Ruskin who ordered the publishers of *Sesame and Lillies* to use red ink for the paragraph on the starving shoemaker.

If we turn to the United States, the roll-call is even less impressive. There is bitter, unremitting, hard-boiled bourgeois doctrine; there certainly is racism. But who reads William G. Sumner? What educated person today pays the slightest attention to John L. Stoddard? Our whole literary tradition is overwhelmingly libertarian, in the best sense; and the artistic reputation of American reaction must rest on the lurid effulgence of Westbrook Pegler, and on the sad vaticinations of Anne Morrow Lindbergh—though Lawrence Dennis is beginning to look dangerous enough.

Not so in France. When the horror of Vichy broke upon the world, the intellectual climate of the new *régime* had been in the making for a long time. Powerful forces generated the mephitic air: distinguished publishers, influential *salons,* solemn academicians, pamphleteers on the

make, accredited apologists of reaction, tired dilettanti in search of a new thrill. Guided by the expert hand of de Brinon (that darling of Bonnet and of Ribbentrop), the ineffable Abetz knew exactly where to go on his "cultural" mission. A small, well entrenched *bourgeoisie,* shocked by its repeated defeats at the polls, and jealous of the traditions and of the privileges it had inherited from the Monarchy and from the Empire, this caste was biding its time, ready to get even with the Republic.

It isn't necessary to review the huge mass of reactionary thought in the first part of the nineteenth century. It would take us too far afield to go back to De Maistre, de Bonald, Chateaubriand, Joubert, Balzac and Guizot. If we begin, say, with the Second Empire, we are assailed by a host of distinguished names which would have to be included in any comprehensive treatment of French thought and literature: Taine, Gobineau, Barbey d'Aurévilly, Bourget, the two Daudets (Ernest and Léon), Brunetière, Barrès, Valois, Lasserre, the Tharaud brothers, Massis, Bloy, Drieu la Rochelle, Thierry Maulnier. . . .

I am certain there are omissions. And there are many perplexing cases, both before and after the Second Empire. For example, what is one to do with Stendhal? Caesarism, appeal to a small élite, rationalization of violence and of the dangerous life, contempt for the masses (they made him physically ill, he confessed); above all that strange justification of hypocrisy which he erects into a virtue: even when one considers that the man was a great *fumiste,* one of a long and flourishing line of mystifiers, it is very hard not to associate him with the men he influenced so markedly—with Nietzsche, Taine and Bourget. Another case, Georges Sorel. He despised intellectuals, democracy, peace, compassion; he stressed asceticism, dynamics, daily heroism. All of that taken out of context, could serve a Mussolini, as it is said to have done.

Stendhal and Sorel may be hard to classify rigidly. But the antidemocratic army looms large enough without them. How large is another question—how large, that is, in comparison with the defenders of the Rights of Man and of the tradition which flows from that doctrine. It wouldn't be too difficult to draw up a list of writers who effectively upheld Republican, libertarian and even proletarian hopes. In number, creative power, in the sheer mass of the books they published, in the circulation they reached, in wide diffusion, both geographical and social, in total artistic prestige as a group, the writers of the Left certainly outdistance

their adversaries. But the latter wrote for a public which was in the most strategic position to prepare the great betrayal. In a brilliant little book, *Panorama de la littérature française contemporaine* (Kra, 1929), Bernard Fay described that public, long before Munich and its consequence, the break-through at the Meuse. As other critics have done, Professor Fay indicated how bitterly these people hated democracy, how powerful they were in finance, in industry, in agriculture, in public administration. He also added the trait which is so important in studying this public: respect for the written word, the extent to which it was hypnotized by the literature it provoked.

II

French fascism has three important tendencies. It is clerical, like the Austrian and Spanish varieties; and it appeals, by turns, to the meekness and to the militancy; to the decorum, the morality of *les bien pensants,* and to the violent indignation of the faithful. French fascism is imbued with chauvinism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism. It is provincial, in a very literal sense. In its blind and furious opposition to Jacobin centralization, it has stressed a very narrow and static regionalism; and it gave a singularly restricting and paralyzing emphasis to the broader appeals of Latinism and Occidentalism. Finally French fascism is frankly bourgeois, crudely class-conscious. The Italian Fascists and the Nazis have condemned capitalism, plutocracy, the "slavery of interest," and so forth. They have adapted the language of socialism to their own ends. By and large French fascism has kept itself aloof from such denunciations. It is convulsed by a neurotic hatred of equalitarianism. It is frightened into violence by the specter of *la majorité niveleuse,* the Barbarians, who would dilute the effectiveness of a caste of superior families. It still equates "superior" with "prosperous," just as Guizot equated "capacity" with the ability to pay taxes.

It would be a mistake to suppose that all chauvinists are clericals or that all clericals fought for bourgeois privilege. Taine, who feared the average man ("a gorilla, sensuous and ferocious") was a free thinker in religious matters, and paid dearly for his convictions. A man like Maurras went through the motions of attending mass when it suited his political convenience, only to turn around and call the Pope pro-German, when the Vatican condemned *L'Action française.* All in all, however, the men

who prepared the intellectual climate of Vichy go down the line: clericals, chauvinists, class-conscious bourgeois. With these generalizations in mind, we are now ready to examine these three currents at closer range.

III

When Marshal Pétain was catapulted into power, he made a speech whose essential burden he was to repeat often, and others after him. He diagnosed the reason for the collapse at the front: The French people, he said, had been enjoying themselves and they were being punished for it. They should have been working harder. They should have reared larger families. Let there be a day of prayer. Thus the spokesman of clerical, of "Black France" to the frivolous masses, which, at the point of the bayonet had lost even the mild gains so effectively sabotaged by Pétain's friends during the brief period of the Popular Front. This remarkable address stands out because it resembles the pet conception of Dr. Goebbels. It enjoyed phenomenally good fortune; it crossed the Atlantic with celerity; and its main tenets were not lost upon those who were eager to believe them. This is not the place to go into French production figures previous to the renaissance of Vichy; into the role of the Senate and of its notorious finance committee; into the flight of French capital; into the part played by the London appeasers and the magicians of the City; into the diplomatic undermining and isolation of the French Republic. One note, especially relevant in the clerical analysis, claims our attention here: the moralistic note. It acquires its full significance when one compares it to the widespread slogan launched, I believe, by M. Gignoux, the powerful spokesman of French finance and high industry: social reform is the expression of "sordid materialism."

The tenor of Pétain is the tenor of Brunetière. So, too, had spoken that dour, hard-bitten scholastic, the man who had discovered "the bankruptcy of science." Well-being, especially material well-being, is an ignoble goal. The great heresy is *ubi bene, ibi patria.* People are essentially the creatures of low appetites. The only things that will check brutish greed is a return to Catholicism. This pessimistic view of humanity, this astringent asceticism is undoubtedly sincere in a Brunetière, or in a Pétain, constantly under the physician's care in Vichy, which used to be known primarily as a health resort.

But it is hard to believe that all the writers who preached a return to

the Church and to the spiritual rewards of abstemiousness were innocent of ulterior motives. Listen to Barbey d'Aurévilly: "I settled on Catholicism. It is a convenient balcony from which I can spit down on democracy." Or take George Valois, in *L'homme qui vient* (*The Coming Man*):

> Here we have at last, the eternal rule of life—respect for authority, work and prayer. "But" (one might object) "must we make such mighty efforts to obtain nothing more than the law of our fathers, the wisdom of the simplest among them?" Yes, but something has changed. We now have a stronger moral edifice. Our father, the Man of the Past, was prompted by sheer tradition; and his faith, his acceptance of the law of work, could be damaged and even destroyed by a sophistry.[1] Our child, the Coming Man will act no differently, but he will no longer fear the attacks of semi-reason. . . . Work and prayer: on them rests the dignity of man and all his greatness. . . .
>
> Blessed be thy name, O Conqueror, for thy whip is like our ever present desire to rise above nature. Strike, master, strike, if you love us[2] . . . . lest we return to lazy animality. Strike so that we may remain men!

From work and prayer to obedience and violence, there is only a short step for Valois.

This curious departure from spirituality which takes Valois to the Man with the Whip has a hammy and disingenuous side. It is precisely this lack of candor in political clericalism which disturbs a sincere and moving Catholic writer, like François Mauriac, as he reads the eloquent prose of Barrès. *"Et vous, M. Barrès, croyez-vous à tout cela?"*, asks the author of Thérese Desqueyroux. "Do *you* believe all that?" Surely, it is a curious spectacle to witness generals, academicians, and society people continually harping on renunciation; and the question naturally arises: who is to do the renouncing?

The case of Mauriac reminds us of those Catholic writers like Claudel and Jammes, who did not permit their prestige to be used by forces subversive to democracy. Nor should one forget a Marc Sagnier, and his great effort to bring together Catholicism and democracy. Sagnier worked in the tradition of Lamennais and of the earlier Montalembert. There is nothing in common between the histrionic Barrès, bored, skeptical, disillu-

[1] I.e., democratic doctrine.

[2] This beatific passage (one of many such) was to find its echo in the chants of the German labor battalions. "We thank the Führer for the hard life which he bestowed on us in the labor service."

sioned, dilettantish, and a man like Péguy, who never forgot his proletarian origin, and whose whole life, in and out of the Church, was a relentless battle against *la misère,* against squalor, both physical and spiritual (*"La misère* in economics is like hell in theology").

IV

Those who are acquainted with the calm professorial bellicism of a Faguet, for example, have no idea of the lengths to which French chauvinism has gone. Not that it is any worse than any other kind of chauvinism. This sort of aberration is universal and is always fraught with delightful surprises.

Léon Bloy was addressing an audience of Danish francophiles in Copenhagen. He began as follows, "If my country ordered me to burn down this city in order to boil her a three minute egg, I would do it." Jehan Rictus, who tells the story, also notes that Bloy seemed put out by the resentment of the pacific Danes in the lecture hall. An utterance like Bloy's would have seemed entirely natural to a Déroulède or to a Maurras. Perhaps it would have been even more natural to that poet of hate and carnage, Barrès.

In this complicated son of Lorraine we find the most intemperate and unscrupulous expression of narrow nationalism. The immediate interests of the country alone are valid. It is literally my country, right or wrong, absolutely, without qualification. "The role of teachers is to justify French habits and prejudices, so that our children may take their rank in the procession." Don't bother the patriot with big words like "truth," "reason." There is only French truth and French reason, in the sense just defined, the Machiavellian sense of power politics. To make that truth prevail, it is our duty to kill, and a fortiori, a mere trifle to lie. The Nazis invented nothing! Jean de Pierrefeu, who drafted official bulletins during the first World War, has gauged the meaning of *le nationalisme intégral,* as it grandiloquently calls itself. "They (Barrès and Maurras) have forgiven me all my misdeeds. They never cared how far to the left I went. All they knew is that I yielded to the dogma of the patriotic lie for four years. Only, the lies of Maurras never made *him* suffer."

The chauvinism of the Jacobin, the frenzied patriotism of Michelet, hymns to the bayonet and all, were of a different sort. In fifty years the context of the term changes radically. Previous to 1848, the chauvinist

saw no contradiction between intense nationalism and the attempt to establish international good will and understanding. More important still, in no sense was love of the fatherland tied up with the promotion of an oligarchy. Jacobin patriotism really meant equality and fraternity. It tried to attain universalism, or at least Europeanism. That type of patriotism Barrès rejected scornfully. It was "Kantian," it was "Protestant." Gide, born a Protestant, delighted in quoting back at him the dictum of a great Catholic, Father Arnauld, of Port Royal fame: "Whatever be your order, (today we would say class), or whatever be your country, you must believe only what is true, only what you would believe if you belonged to another country or to another order." To the new nationalists, that was treason.

V

It is easier for French chauvinists to agree on their hates than to give positive form to their social philosophy. Hate for the democratic humanitarianism of "the stupid nineteenth century" (the title of a virulent book by Lèon Daudet); and the reason for that hate (Daudet *dixit*) is "that there is absolute incompatibility between the Rights of Man and military discipline." Hate for the critical spirit and the *Université,* the Sorbonne in particular. In this campaign Pierre Lasserre and René Benjamin were destined to serve chauvinism with effective ammunition. Hate, too, for Protestants, *métèques* (foreigners), Masons and Jews.

Anti-Semitism, which looms so large during the last decade was very mild before the '80's. Drumont's *La France juive* and the Dreyfus affair were the beginning of a long series of vitriolic books which is certainly not at an end. Léon Daudet, Maurras, the Tharaud brothers, all in their own way, have clamored for their "rug of Yiddish skin": the Tharaud brothers probably most effectively, most artistically; Lèon Daudet most screamingly and even most scatologically.

In the intemperance of abuse, of invective, of obscenity, we have a characteristic of French chauvinism which identifies it with the usual tenor of Fascist and of Nazi utterance. Unchecked verbal violence leads to physical attack by armed bands on defenseless individuals—a familiar pattern. And curiously enough, we also see the enlistment of college youth (O shades of *Les Misérables,* shades of Marius!) in idealistic attacks upon the weak. These students were undoubtedly in the minority, but they played the paradoxical part of rebels, even though reactionary rebels.

If we turn from the destructive to the creative content of French chauvinism, we find it extremely confused. It takes three orientations, and these keep changing in connotation, with the times. Here, too, we have a familiar phenomenon in modern nihilism, namely the shifting slogan. In a literal sense, French chauvinism turned to provincialism. Its greatest vogue was before the first World War, though Pétain's *camarilla* was to make use of the concept after the marshal moved to his health resort. In point of time, Latinism straddles the war, and acquires new meaning with the advent of Mussolini. Occidentalism is most fashionable in the '20's.

Barrès and Bourget are probably the most fulsome advocates of provincialism, but Barrès is more closely identified with it. It hardly seems profitable to recite how Barrès discovered his brand of patriotism in his native province and how he became convinced that a simple little girl like Colette Baudoche must be superior to about the best Herr Doktor that Germany could produce, just by being a daughter of Lorraine. The teaching of *les Déracinés,* like that of *l'Etape,* is twofold. It says that we serve our country best by staying put in the province which nurtured us and our fathers. If you "uproot" people (the chavinist-traditionalist school thought of them in terms of trees) they perish. If in addition to taking them to the big city, you give them an education, you hurt them no end. They become misfits and turn out badly.

The first theory, based on the nursery-tree simile, has great rhetorical advantages and inevitable weaknesses in logic. It wasn't much of a job for that prince of modern criticism, André Gide, to demolish it. He pointed out, *primo,* that people were not trees, even though God made us all; *secundo,* that trees actually thrive by being transplanted and, *tertio,* that with the inevitable mobility of population inherent in modern conditions, it was rather difficult for people to become identified with a certain locality as an earnest of their patriotism and personal worth. His father a northerner, his mother from Uzès, himself a Parisian, where was Gide expected to immobilize himself? Thus ran "the Quarrel of the Poplar Tree," which had a number of diverting aspects.

This obscurantist provincialism has definite political implications. The electoral laws of the '70's were written in the shadow of the Commune by a victorious class which was bound to hamstring Paris, and all urban centers, for that matter. The Senate, elected indirectly, gave gross-

ly disproportionate powers to the rural sections of France, which were expected to remain the most reactionary in the country, the most easily dominated by the local *hobereau,* landowner, lawyer or banker. It wasn't a bad scheme, from the angle of the men who framed the constitution. Its great drawback was the spread of education, and its greatest enemy was the teacher, the traditional—and effective—enemy of the rural oligarchy.

Now it may well be that Barrès, who often expressed his contempt for parliamentary institutions, had in mind nothing resembling the support of a reactionary mechanism. It is nevertheless a strange coincidence that both his distrust of universal education and his exaltation of rural France fitted in so well with the deliberate purpose of humbling the less docile cities and of ankylosing legislation at will.

Concerning the intentions of Daudet, there can be no possible doubt. Witness this passage from his *The Stupid Nineteenth Century*:

> What is the force which has maintained the French nation and has kept it from being dissolved in a revolutionary manner these past one hundred and thirty years? That is very simple; it is our peasantry. It is safe to say that in war and in peace, the peasant has remained uncontaminated by the stupidity of "innovation"! He has saved the country by resisting social erosion. He has fed the *bourgeoisie,* and has replenished each generation with elements which were physically and morally healthy, laborious, often generous, always original and powerful. His intellectual and moral savings have done even more good than the money he has put away. He has even resisted Jewish bankers, he has resisted the press. It is almost inconceivable. I couldn't express the admiration which possesses me when I see one of our cottages in Touraine, Brittany, in Vendée, in the Vosges, in Savoy—the cottage with its chimney, its little garden, the cart standing before the door, the murmur of children and of parents, the rooster, the three chickens, the dog, the horse, the six rabbits. I say to myself that this little entity, human and divine at once, has stood off every sort of murderous imbecility. It has stood off Rousseau, the Rights of Man, Kant, Robespierre, Bonaparte and their apologists, Hugo, romanticism, Jewish bankers, demagogues and demophiles. . . . I think of all this, my hands joined together and tears in my eyes, tears of gratitude, historical and mystical, like the joyful tears of Pascal.

I do not know what the adherents of obscurantist provincialism thought when the Germans officially sanctioned the autonomist "movement" in Brittany, if we are to believe the press. For the moment, Vichy seems to be determined—again, according to some press dispatches—to use the province as a geographical framework for corporative associations, Mussolini style.

The chauvinistic conception of Latinism is the counterpart of "Kultur," which it resembles closely. It was rooted, first of all, in the deep sense of humiliation which followed the Franco-Prussian war, just as Aryanism became attractive to the Nazis after the treaty of Versailles. In a penetrating book written in 1930, *Inquiétude et Reconstruction,* Benjamin Crémieux establishes the basic distinctions between the universality which characterized French Greco-Latin influence in the eighteenth century (for example) and the querulous pettiness of the men who claimed to represent Latinism and who used it in an excluding sense. It was no longer "a treasure which everybody could use," it became a miser's hoard for selfish ends." Nothing could be further from real classicism, says Crémieux, than the casting out of all Europeans east and north of France. By forcibly excluding all Germans from the community of civilized men, the chauvinists had turned a human ideal into a "fortified camp." (The metaphoric lavishness is that of Crémieux.) Genuine classicism, he points out, united men; it deliberately eliminated national and racial differentiation and "reduced all art to the study of human traits which are general and permanent."

This so-called Latinism of the reactionaries did not change materially with Germany's defeat. More than ever, they needed a divisive formula, something to stave off a greater menace, the contagion of German socialism, the possibility of a *rapprochement* with the Weimar Republic, the threat of a stronger League of Nations, which would definitely check annexationist ambitions and principally the scheme to take over the left side of the Rhine. And when Mussolini appeared on the horizon, these people found new overtones in a slogan which stressed the identification of the civilized man with the Latin, the Mediterranean, and the authoritarian. That tendency found its most charming expression in the manifesto which followed Mussolini's march into Ethiopia, a manifesto entitled *For the Defense of Culture.* We shall have more to say about it further on.

The notion of Occidentalism, of which Henri Massis is perhaps the most skillful spokesman, is no less arbitrary, exclusive, pugnacious. Massis lived in the fear of *"les Asiates aux yeux avides et louches."* A vast tribe, these greedy, shifty-eyed Asiatics. They paid no attention to political boundaries (witness Romain Rolland: wasn't he enthusiastic about Gandhi?); and the greediest, the most shifty-eyed Asiatics were the Russians and those who wanted an understanding with them. The time had come for

all good Occidentals to come to the aid of their party. Thus was Munich prepared.

VI

In Flaubert's *Education sentimentale* there is an episode describing the Revolution of 1848. A group of bourgeois huddle in a *salon,* while the mobs are storming the Tuileries. "Why," exclaims one of the characters (I quote from memory), "the whole world is of one mind, all men and all animals. If the lion could speak, he would proclaim the sanctity of private property." The storm blows over, fear subsides, but the hate born of that fear remains, brutal and tenacious. "A fellow who was mighty nervous about his bank account in 1871," says Bourget's Monneron about Taine. And, in fact, it is hard to explain the ferocity of Taine, of Thiers, of Le Bon, towards socialism, indeed towards democracy, except in the light of Monneron's quip. "The most beautiful of hates, the queen of queens, the breath of civil war," sings Barrès. It is in this hate and in this fear of the masses that we have the anticipation of Weygand's surrender and of the ascendancy of the new *gauleiters* of France.

Perhaps the most candid expression of bourgeois fascism (as distinguished from the fascism of the "Great Manslaving Profession") is to be found in Paul Bourget, who, thorough in everything, possessed "the art of getting lost methodically." One of his own admirers, Lemaître, has pointed out how closely Bourget's philosophy ties in with *"le caporalisme,"* the French version of the *führerprinzip.*

All through the months following the election of the Popular Front, the rightist press kept on screaming about *"le pays réél,"* "the real country," a travesty of the proletarian slogan against the Guizot oligarchy of a century ago. Bourget tells us where his side looks for *"le pays réél."* We must find it in the élite of superior bourgeois families who have endowed France with officers,[3] diplomats, professors, and artists.

This patrician class, says Bourget in the preface to *Le Disciple,* has

> suffered everything in the service of the country. It has seen the ignoble masters of the day proscribe its most cherished beliefs in the name of liberty. It has seen abominable politicians, using universal suffrage in order to install their lying mediocrity in high places. It has endured universal suffrage, the most monstrous

[3]Maurice Martin du Gard says that Bourget wept over heroes and that the surest way to be one was to rise at least above the rank of captain.

> and iniquitous of tyrannies—for the force of numbers is the most brutal of forces; it doesn't even have audacity and talent in its favor. Our youthful *bourgeoisie* has put up with it all, just for the sake of doing useful work. If our soldiers come and go, if foreign countries respect us, if our higher education forges ahead, if our arts and our literature keep on proclaiming our genius, we owe it all to our *bourgeoisie*. It has no military victory to its credit as yet; that is true. It has not been able to solve the problem which democracy has saddled upon it . . . still, do not despise it. It is through it, this élite, that France lives on.

Lest I run the dangers of *Hamlet* which (observed a wag) is a splendid play but too full of quotations, I shall confine myself to just two quotations before I leave Bourget. They are extremely significant; they are unconscious revelations of his spirit and they catch it to the life. The first is a description of a humble character:

> He belonged to that class of workers (fortunately there are still many of them left) who are resigned to their fate. . . . But to be resigned to one's station in life implies a sense of social hierarchy. Well, a birch isn't jealous of an oak. It is content to be what it is.

The second morsel comes from an article published by Maurice Martin du Gard and published in 1935 in *Les Nouvelles Littéraires*:

> I believe that even the most reactionary *salon* would hardly dare distinguish between genteel people and common people the way Bourget does. . . . "It was enough," he writes in *l'Ecuyère,* "it was enough for passion to sweep through this lady to make her react like a daughter of the *peuple*." Maybe you don't know how the Countess de Malhyres reacted? She simply poisoned her aunt, that's all.

With the exception of flagrant anti-Semitism, Bourget is complete: authoritarianism, deification of the "right" families, clericalism as an instrument of "caporalist" hierarchy, morbid distrust of lay teaching, traditionalism, obscurantist provincialism (Barrès style), horror of the masses, class hatred. He himself has left an astonishing self-description when he called himself "an intellectual *émigré*." How reminiscent of the Coblenz clique, which followed on the heels of the Prussian uhlans and built their privileges upon the white terror! how prophetic, too!

VII

It is one of the disadvantages of an *ex-parte* position that it leads one to neglect the aesthetic, the critical, the scholarly contribution of a group of men whose social and political writing has been so nefarious. When

Taine writes about Saint Simon, when Bourget analyzes Baudelaire, when Brunetière explains Balzac (the latter's politics excluded), they command our highest admiration. The Tharaud brothers are exquisite stylists; Lèon Daudet has written some of the most delightful pages ever published on gastronomy. Even a murderous pamphleteer like Béraud (I mean literally murderous; consider the tragic death of Salengro), so suspect of being, in Gobineau's phrase, a literary *condottiere,* has done some pieces which are amusing in their truculence.

The reader may well ponder whether the ideas and the utterances attributed to the men who are accused here of being the forerunners of Vichy are true in their context, historical and artistic. Obviously, the only convincing verification is to examine their writings at first hand. But there are two interesting tests which will bear on the validity of the conclusions in this paper.

The first is the appearance of four documents which came out in Paris just after the Italian invasion of Ethiopia. So far as I know, nobody in this country took any notice of them with the exception of Mr. Malcolm Cowley, who devoted an important article to them in the *New Republic.*[4] A manifesto entitled *For the Defense of Culture* started the battle. Mr. Cowley quoted from it at some length and I reproduce his translation of an excerpt:

> An attempt is being made to launch the European nations against Rome. People do not hesitate to call Italy a culprit, to point her out to the world as a common enemy. . . .
>
> It is not without amazement that we see a nation whose colonial empire occupies a fifth of the world opposing the justifiable undertakings of young Italy, and see this nation light-heartedly adopting the dangerous myth of the absolute equality of all nations—a course of action that has, under the circumstances, won it the support of all the revolutionary forces now making use of the same theory to fight the Italian government at home, and, simultaneously, to deliver all Europe to the desired upheavels.
>
> To this fatal alliance, Geneva lends the formidable support of a bogus internationalism that tries to establish equality between the superior and the inferior, the civilized man and the savage. The result of this fury for equality is . . . the sanctions, which, in order to halt the civilizing conquest of one of the most backward regions in the world (where even Christianity has had no effect) would not hesitate to unchain a universal conflict, nor to unite all anarchies and all disorders against a country where, during the last fifteen years, we have

[4] *Two Sides of the Barricades,* Jan. 15, 1935.

> seen affirmed, enhanced, organized and fortified some of the essential virtues of the highest humanity.
>
> This fratricidal conflict . . . would be not only a crime against peace but an unpardonable assault upon occidental civilization. . . . We intellectuals, who should protect culture with all the more vigilance because we profit more from its blessings, cannot let civilization choose against itself. To prevent such a suicide, we appeal to all the forces of the spirit.

Sixty-four intellectuals signed this noble piece of literature, among whom twelve were members of the French Academy. *For the Defense of Culture* bore the names of Maurice Donnay, Abel Hermant, Henri Bordeaux, Claude Farrère. These names speak for themselves.

There were three answers to the document. One, entitled *Reply to the Fascist Intellectuals,* was signed by some of the greatest names in contemporary French literature: Alain, Aragon, Bloch, Benda, Chamson, Durtain, Gide, Giono, Louis Guilloux, Roger Martin Du Gard, André Malraux, Henry de Montherlant, Romain Rolland, Jules Romains, Charles Vildrac. These writers said what one would expect them to say.

The third paper, *For Justice and Peace,* was signed by a number of Catholic writers (including François Mauriac, Francis Jammes and Paul Claudel) and also by an imposing group of Catholic professors and prelates. In an open letter to the authors of *For Justice and Peace,* Gide, Chamson and other left-wingers, asked to join their names to this last manifesto. I should like to send the reader to Mr. Cowley's analysis itself. It shows more clearly than I can how closely literary expression can come to political action.

Four years later, after Munich, another test came up. Albert Bayet published in *Lumière,* the weekly he was editing, an "Open Letter to the Four Presidents" (the President of the Republic, the *Président du Conseil* or Prime Minister, the Presidents of the two Chambers). This document —again, as far as I know—was entirely unnoticed in this country. It was largely the work of research men, professors, historians—men like Hauser and Seignobos, trained by long years of experience in critical analysis to see with terrible clarity the catastrophe which lay ahead. The "Open Letter to the Four Presidents" assumed the challenging form of a stream of questions, hundreds of them. If anything should have broken the ranks of *les bien pensants* and rallied them to the country, that document was it. Needless to say, it did no such thing. Class spirit prevailed. The Coblenzards of '39 acted like their predecessors in '93.

The essence of the fascist position, in France, as elsewhere, is found in its contradictions, incoherencies and ironies. The men who wanted to take over the Rhinelanders because "it would promote them" (in French, the expression carries the literal military connotation) find that the Nazis can do a little promoting of their own. The advocates of obscurantism see their own museums looted, their own libraries decimated. Provincialism may well become the pretext for turning all of France into an agricultural helot state, only little better than the Polish corral. The clericals may find that prayer, obedience and work is their only program. The advocates of the official lie must certainly have their fill of it. And what of the Machiavelic Latinists writing under the lash of Mussolini Africanus?

A BRAHMIN'S VERSION OF DEMOCRACY

By LINCOLN R. GIBBS

THE CAREER OF JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL, viewed from the angle of 1941, is not inspiring. Even to Lowell himself it was a disappointment, despite many honors and successes. In young manhood Lowell had his moment of glory and danger in the anti-slavery ranks; but after the Civil War he lost his orientation, failed to recognize the fundamental issue of the times, and wasted his strength upon minor reforms. There is no question of an apostasy for the sake of wealth or honors. Lowell did not sell himself to conservatism "just for a handful of silver" or "for a ribbon to stick in his coat." His defection had insidious causes and is consistent with genuine Americanism and idealism. He failed to heed and to bring to a sharp focus intimations that came to him of an inherent, deep-seated evil in the business system. The corruptions of politics disgusted and alarmed him, but he did not see that their root was deeper than politics. He became a lost leader, not because of greed or ambition. But the loss was actual and heavy, for American society, in the years between 1865 and 1891, needed precisely the idealistic wisdom of Lowell, tempered as it was by shrewd common sense and humor.

Lowell said, "Not failure, but low aim, is crime." His failure was not criminal; only a noble man could fail in his way. And this makes his career significant, for all good men are subject to the same insidious influences that caused his bewilderment and ineffectiveness. The good that is incidental to an imperfect and unjust social system blinds them; the scandals and corruptions that appear on the surface, and are little more than symptoms, monopolize their attention; they fail to push their diagnosis to the root of the malady; their small reforms achieve little. The social philosopher must not be timid; he can hardly be too radical if he is also catholic and scientific. Lowell's failure is more instructive than the successes of smaller men.

In 1873 the University of Oxford conferred on Lowell the degree of Doctor of Civil Law. Though the honor was wholly welcome and Lowell

wore his scarlet gown with some pride, he was disposed to treat his knowledge of law as a joke. "I don't know much Roman law," he wrote to Thomas Hughes, "but I shall at least endeavor to do credit to my new title by being as civil as an orange to all mankind." In 1941 perhaps the majority of literary historians tend to approve and extend Lowell's profession of ignorance and to question whether he was adequately civil to all mankind. For example, Russell Blankenship attempts to set the older generation right in this matter: "It has been said that Lowell's essays on political subjects are indispensable to an American. They are quite indispensable to anyone who wishes to see how strangely the idea of modern democracy can be perverted by the Brahmin brain." Ludwig Lewisohn ascribes Lowell's failure to ancestral Puritanism. The stream that poisoned American literature and life, according to moralists like Lewisohn, originated in Geneva—not in Rousseau but in Calvin. Puritanism is "averse from dealing with ultimate questions in any field except theology and politics, and is, at the touch of the intimately human, feebly moral or downright false and maudlin." Percy H. Boynton is convinced that Lowell, after a few years of adventurous radicalism in youth, shrank in intellectual cowardice and indolence from the problems, theological and social, of the post-bellum period. "Whether in economic or social or religious thought, as an aging man he returned to the comfort of an arm chair by the fireside. New occasions no longer taught new duties." The most tolerant of recent critics is Granville Hicks, who is probably in social philosophy the most radical of them all. In his view Lowell deserves attention "partly because his failure was so typical." He made a promising start in the '40's and '50's, and might have interpreted to the post-war generation the spirit of the Golden Day. But his leadership was nearly fruitless. Why? Hicks indicates as causes of Lowell's failure his Tory family connections, the Harvard, Cambridge, and Boston tradition of genteel respectability, the comfort and academic drowsiness of a Harvard professorship, and the spiritual misfortune of becoming a pillar of society—arbiter of literary taste, editor of the *Atlantic Monthly* and the *North American Review,* and minister to Spain and Great Britain. He lost his great opportunity. In the '50's even the advocacy of abolition was respectable and involved no sacrifice, however true the contrary may have been in the '30's and '40's, when Whittier and Lowell joined the movement.

In many of these strictures I concur. It is true that in his later years Lowell suffered from a mild form of gout and perhaps from a corresponding malady in the upper part of his anatomy. It is mainly true that he missed his opportunity, and I regard it as one of the major misfortunes of American history that there was no commanding moral leadership in the post-bellum period. Emerson's influence was waning; Thoreau died in 1861, his influence is wholly posthumous and failed to get momentum till near our own time; moreover, Thoreau's social ideas are too negative, fragmentary and anarchistic to gain or to deserve wide popular influence (however stimulating he may be as a critic); Whitman did not command an audience in America till near the time of his death (1892) and his conception of American democracy is too visionary and pantheistic to be a rallying point for the practical reforms that were needed. Of all writers living in 1865 Lowell seems to me best fitted by temperament, moral character, early record, position, and convictions to give the required leadership. He had common sense as well as idealism; in the main he was free from partisan and sectional bias. He had a vigorous sense of humor and was no doctrinaire, or paper statesman, or moonshine politician. His ability to recognize political sagacity in others was exceptional—he was perhaps the very first prominent New Englander to be won over by Abraham Lincoln. He had proved his ability to focus public sentiment and give it direction by the *Biglow Papers* and many other writings in verse and prose. He could write with wit, pungency, homely Yankee shrewdness, and vernacular wisdom. He had the makings of a journalist in the higher ranks of the profession, together with enough solid ballast of scholarship and character to give his utterances weight and steadiness. He might have been the man of the hour, and his failure to rise to his opportunity saddened his last years and has been a privation of which American civilization is still feeling the effects.

Lowell's failure is typical of his generation and is worthy of study on that account; moreover, amid the wreckage of his career, there are fragments of social wisdom, positive and precious. The man was capable of clear and profound insights which he sometimes phrased with point and eloquence. One must not expect to find in his writings a comprehensive social philosophy or even a symmetrical discussion of any of the great issues of his time. He hadn't the training or the intellectual persistence to be a social philosopher or a systematic thinker in any field,

even in that of literature. But insight, even if it be restricted to momentary flashes, has value, no less than system. At the worst the unsystematic thinker does not become the victim of his system, for he has none. He may have prejudices in the blood of which he is unaware, but there is no vain tyrant in his mind tempting him to color and distort every fact he encounters. If now and then the unsystematic person discerns a corner of the truth, it is likely to be something important that the systematizers have failed to see. It may turn out to be an unruly but dynamic truth which refuses to be assigned to a post in the orthodox theory but is dangerous to ignore. Probably Lowell would have gained much and risked little if he had made a more scientific and a more philosophical approach to political questions; but it doesn't seem to have been in his make-up to do so—he was a browser rather than a scholar; he loved first impressions and disliked the labor of repeating and testing his ideas; he felt incapable of writing except when in the vein. These disabilities have compensations that are not to be despised—freshness, sincerity, and power to stimulate the thinking of people more systematic and philosophical, perhaps, than the author himself. For the sake of having a typical specimen of the failures of leadership of the period 1865-1891, and for the scattered fragments of social wisdom we may find, let us look at Lowell's conception of democracy, at the dangers he saw confronting American democracy in his own time, and at the safeguards he proposed.

Was he temperamentally democratic? The question is important, for democracy that is in the intellect and not in the blood is of little avail for popular leadership. I dare say that the Adams family entertained an unimpeachable democratic philosophy, but they contrived to get the reputation of thinking themselves of superior clay; they have not exercised leadership commensurate with their abilities or their characters. Lowell's democracy was in the blood. He wrote to Sydney Gay, February 26, 1849: "A consciousness of external superiority to other men is painful to me. I never could ride in a two-horse coach with any comfort. I am afraid to meet the eyes of passers-by. I know they detect me as an impostor at once. On the other hand I drive my father's venerable 'September' (my senior by several years) with entire satisfaction. I am certain to be rather pitied than envied by the shabbiest pedestrian."

Doesn't this remind one of many professions of equalitarian sentiment in Walt Whitman? For my part I prefer the Lowell brand of equal-

ity as less extravagant, more temperate, and more humorous in the expression.

On the other hand, Lowell also described himself as a "natural tory." "I always was a natural tory and in England (barring Dizzy) should be a staunch one. I would not give up a thing that had roots to it, though it might suck up its food from grave-yards." Every vital thing in politics has roots. The cleverest machine can do nothing but transform, distribute, and apply power till it wears out; it cannot create power or produce its own successor. Institutions that grow from roots have in them the moral energies of people; they are fertile as well as useful. There is no contradiction between this type of conservatism and equalitarian sentiment; but the associations of politics create the illusion of contradiction, and probably Lowell never thought out the reconciliation. His conservatism was like Burke's—a recognition of the continuity of history and a profound reverence for the inherited tradition, a perception of the danger of breaking from the tradition in order to adopt some brand-new political gadget.

Temperamentally Lowell was a rare blend of tory and progressive. As a progressive he could write an oratorical poem on the necessity of being children of the future—

They have rights who dare maintain them; we are traitors to our sires,
Smothering in their holy ashes Freedom's new-lit altar-fires;
Shall we make their creed our jailer? Shall we, in our haste to slay,
From the tombs of the old prophets steal the funeral lamps away
To light up the martyr-fagots round the prophets of today?

New occasions teach new duties; Time makes ancient good uncouth;
They must upward still, and onward, who would keep abreast of Truth;
Lo, before us gleam her camp-fires! we ourselves, must Pilgrims be,
Launch our Mayflower, and steer boldly through the desperate winter sea,
Nor attempt the Future's portal with the Past's blood-rusted key.

As a conservative Lowell could propose, by way of escape from the corruptions and dangers of the Gilded Age, an abandonment of democracy and a return to "our original institution as a republic again. Our present system has resulted in our being governed by a secret irresponsible club called the United States Senate for their own private benefit." Perhaps this last proposal is one of the strange Brahmin perversions of democracy

that Russell Blankenship deplores. It looks more like the great apostasy than anything else I have found in Lowell. I suppose that this suggestion means a partial surrender of government by the people, by restoration of property qualifications for the suffrage and by other restrictions. It means government by an aristocracy of wealth, family, and culture. In practice this would be economic royalism without check.

But this retrograde suggestion doesn't represent Lowell's whole mind. Disgusted and alarmed by the gross corruptions of the '70's and '80's, he turned now in one direction, now in the other—now toward the past and now toward the future. He was bewildered. He looked forward sometimes to a collectivist system as the only solution—socialism or communism, but he could not reconcile himself to the monotonous Dutch landscape that all the artists who paint the collectivist Utopia hold up to view. The worst apostasy that can be charged against him is that his faith in democracy wavered. And the charge of Pharisaism or snobbery will not hold. Lowell's confidence in the soundness of the people remained as firm as ever; the worst he ever said of them was that they were sometimes kittle cattle to shoe behind—and he said this in good humor, prompted by a momentary fear that popular sentiment might favor inflation of the currency or repudiation of the public debt. His distrust of democracy was not distrust of the people. It was the machinery of government that creaked ominously in his ears, and the moral lapses of leaders that filled him with apprehension. Well, doesn't anyone feel at times that government is a monster that defeats the sound sense of the people? I should fancy that even the most extreme conservative has his moments of impatient anarchism. And the problem of political leadership is always with us—of finding leaders, investing them with power enough to make them leaders indeed, keeping them clean, and cashiering them when they go wrong. As regards Lowell, I imagine that an active part in politics—say a seat in Congress—would have clarified his mind and restored his faith in democratic government.

We should now take a more deliberate look at Lowell's conception of democracy. In 1865 Lowell wrote of the revelations made by the Civil War: "What splendid possibilities has not our trial revealed even to ourselves! What costly stuff whereof to make a nation! Here at last is a state whose life is not narrowly concentrated in a despot or a class, but feels itself in every limb; a government which is not a mere application of

force from without, but dwells as a vital principle in the will of every citizen."

In 1884, near the end of his service as minister to Great Britain, he made an address on democracy at Birmingham. His object was two-fold: (1) to defend his country against European criticism, and (2) to recommend universal suffrage to the British, who were then discussing the extension of the franchise. Both these objects tended to keep the shortcomings and dangers of democracy in the background and to push the strength and the success to the fore, as Lowell was fully aware. He attempts nothing novel or profound by way of definition, but indicates his own conception largely by quoting the words of others. "Democracy is nothing more than an experiment in government, more likely to succeed in a new soil, but likely to be tried in all soils, which must stand or fall on its own merits as others have done before it—government of the people, by the people, for the people." He added Theodore Parker's ethical conception of democracy—not "I'm as good as you are," but "You're as good as I am." Lowell feels that if only this ethical conception could be made to prevail, "it would easily solve all the riddles that the old sphinx of political and social economy who stands by the roadside has been proposing to mankind from the beginning, and which mankind have shown such a singular talent for answering wrongly." Somewhere Lowell adds to his definition of democracy the phrase of Napoleon: *la carrière ouverte aux talents* ("the tools to him who can use them"). Democracy is opportunity.

The important question to raise is whether Lowell recognized the dangers and transformations of American democracy that were appearing in the latter part of his life. For the service that the literary statesman can render depends on his sensitive perception of the currents of his period. He should be a prophet, very clear and sound in his own human evaluations, full of the courage of his convictions. Lowell saw the scandals of his period—the Tweed Ring, the Whiskey Ring, the Crédit Mobilier plot, the Star Route scandal, and the rest. His left-wing critics charge him with failing to make any public protest and confining his remonstrance to private correspondence. The charge isn't wholly just. Lowell took the lead in his own community in organizing opposition to the nomination of Blaine in 1876, became a delegate to the Republican national convention in Cincinnati, helped to prevent the nomination, and took consider-

able pride in the fact that Blaine was stopped by the New England delegates. It is true that Lowell said little in public about the evils of his time. I wish he had said more. I wish he had taken an active part in politics, as he had opportunity. In 1876 several delegations of Massachusetts citizens urged him to run for Congress. He firmly and persistently refused, feeling that too great a sacrifice was involved and that he was not fitted for the office. His diffidence is regrettable, but is no evidence of snobbishness or of defection from the democratic faith. Responsibility for legislation and participation in the rough-and-tumble of politics would probably have steadied Lowell's mind, given him an orientation, and served as a tonic. It might have been of signal benefit to the country.

I have thus far put little into the record to inspire enthusiasm for the statesmanship of Lowell. No extraordinary measure of rectitude or intelligence was needed to sense the shame and danger of Tweed or Blaine or Ben Butler. The stench was so rank that the least sensitive nostril must perceive it. The test of statesmanship is to regard such things, not as isolated crimes, but as symptoms of social disorder, and to apply a remedy for the disease. Now there is evidence that Lowell had some sense of the underlying trend and that he had remedies which merit consideration even though, by themselves, they might not prove adequate.

Observation of American politics from 1856 to 1876 caused Lowell to distrust the party system. He felt that the prewar history of the country had developed politicians rather than statesmen. The slavery issue had poisoned political life by compromises on an issue that ought not to be compromised, the cost of compromise being the Civil War. The Republican or Unionist party emerged from the war with the prestige of victory and a glorious opportunity to lead the nation further in the path of reform. But it bungled the reconstruction of the South and followed fanatical and relentless leaders like Thaddeus Stevens, or weak ones like Grant, or venal and selfish ones like James G. Blaine. Lowell does not say that the Republican party achieved its success too promptly to retain its original moral force. But that seems arguable. Its first campaign was in 1856; it elected Lincoln in 1860 and thereafter it was successful till the election of Cleveland in 1884. Political parties, at the best, are subject to rapid moral decline as soon as they are successful, from causes too obvious for explanation; and perhaps the only way of retarding this decline is to discipline the party by a long preliminary period of failure. Persecu-

tion is good for religous faith because it keeps out all but sincere heroic believers, and probably the same principle applies to political parties. Be that as it may, the Republicans carried party loyalty to an absurd excess in the post-war period. They favored Negro suffrage for party reasons, not for patriotic or humanitarian reasons; they waved the bloody shirt; they forced the South to become a Solid South and the Democratic party to become more sectional than was good for the country. Lowell's disgust with the party system was increased by attendance as a delegate at the Republican National Convention of 1876. That experience made him ready to scrap the political convention. Twelve years later he made his proposals for controlling the party system. They were two: (1) Civil Service reform and (2) an unorganized body of nonpartisan citizens, large enough to constitute a balance of power and too small ever to become a party and in its turn be corrupted by the spoils of success.

(1) Civil Service reform was advocated not chiefly as a means of improving the public service and giving it the dignity of a profession. The object was to destroy the spoils system and do away with its evil influence on political morality. The machine cannot live without patronage; if patronage is abolished politicians must depend on the soundness of their convictions for votes. They will still be subject to pressure by groups with special interests, but the evils of machine politics will largely be cancelled. This phase of Lowell's political activity needs no extensive discussion. All honest people, I judge, believe in the merit system in the government service. In 1888 it enlisted the support of many of the most honest leaders in America—E. L. Godkin, Moorfield Storey, Carl Schurz, G. W. Curtis. But it is no panacea. Its significance in the present discussion is that it exemplifies the general high-mindedness of Lowell's character as a citizen.

(2) Lowell's recommendation of nonpartisan independence merits somewhat more discussion. It is very attractive to persons who have no political ambitions for themselves and yet have a concern for good government and a recognition of the tremendous power of political forces, for good or evil. There ought to be millions of such persons in America, and they ought to be especially numerous among the college bred. Now under what conditions can they be effective? Assuming that permanent party organizations are a necessity if there is to be popular government, how can the independent voter make any contribution? His only chance

is to master political questions so thoroughly that he will become actually wise; he will attain such scientific verity as is attainable in the field. If independents approximate to this blessed state, there will be a majority of them to constitute a balance of power. But if they vote their sentiments or hunches, it is likely that they will divide their forces rather evenly between the organized parties and consequently have no effect on the result. I am not excessively confident that a body of citizens exists that is large enough to be politically effective and unselfish enough to give public questions a thorough scientific study.

Lowell's proposal has other inconveniences in practice. It excludes some of the best citizens from the councils of parties, from primaries, caucuses and conventions. Mainly it excludes independents from legislative and administrative office and tends to keep them in the role of irresponsible critics of government. Even so, if they are numerous enough they may exert a strong indirect influence on party policies and the selection of candidates, since party managers must bid for their votes. But independents do not wield power directly; they do not have access to ample information. And they probably tend to become so fastidious, politically, that they cannot support any measure or candidate. They sigh or curse self-righteously, "A plague on both your houses," and retire into the ivory tower.

On the whole Lowell's remedies for the ills of democracy must be pronounced inadequate. Valuable so far as they go and wholly interesting as indications of decency and principle, they are too slight to bear the weight put upon them. But the fact that they were all that Lowell and his like could make, discloses the measure of his political wisdom and its limitations. He saw all that clear moral vision and a genuine sense of human equality enabled him to see. His reactions and revulsions are those of an honest high-minded democrat of a simpler day, when issues were or seemed to be mainly ethical and could be disposed of by a clear-cut ethical decision and the courage to follow it up in action. It is the type of mind that was formed by the antislavery agitation; it has precious values that society can never dispense with and of which society notably feels the lack in 1941. But precious and indispensable as moral sense and courage are, they do not enable one to read the signs of the times in a day when many complex factors emerge, populations increase rapidly and mix confusedly, when science and invention develop new techniques,

new ways of conducting business and industry, new standards of living, new opportunities and new temptations. If Lowell's training had been partly in the social sciences, rather than exclusively in literature, his observation of social trends would have been more penetrating than it was; he would have recognized undercurrents that he only faintly discerned. A sensitive feeling for justice is no bad focal centre about which to group the gifts and graces of a social philosopher or a statesman, but it can hardly function by itself; it needs scientific implements, just as the biologist of keenest and most discriminating vision would hardly progress far without microscopes. Failures of Lowell that critics have charged to snobbery or Puritanism or moralism or mental laziness are actually chargeable to none of these, but to defects of training and the immature condition of the social sciences in Lowell's time. These defects did not limit the scope of his sympathies or prevent him from making some wise proposals. But neither did they save him from bewilderment; he was somewhat like a ship captain who knows how to operate the ship but can't take an observation or do dead reckoning.

In spite of shortcomings, however, Lowell had some inkling of the movements of the post-war period. He saw that large fortunes were piling up and class lines appearing in American society. He saw that a class of propertyless factory workers was forming. He regretted the movement of population to the cities and the disappearance of simple rural manners. He had some inkling of the significance of the exhaustion of cheap land in the west—of the social and economic effects of the disappearance of the frontier. At times he seems to have had at least a momentary conviction that the cure of the ills of democracy is more democracy—democracy in the economic sphere as well as in the political. He cordially and sincerely applauded Henry George so far as George's description of evils and his moral temper were concerned, though he rejected the single tax. If Lowell had had a better training, or perhaps if he had gone into active politics in mature life, he might have put these fragmentary and somewhat hazy impressions into a sharp focus and seen what they meant. He did not compose the picture, and perhaps we cannot do so even in our own time. Lowell failed to see clearly that the economic and political power that the Southern planters had exercised in the first half of the century passed after 1865 to the industrialists of the East and North and that the Republican party became their instrument. He didn't see the economic evils that

are inherent in a social system dominated by the more powerful business men. He finally broke with the Republicans because of the nomination of Blaine, but largely on grounds of morals and decency, not because he saw that the party was becoming a party of privilege.

An account of Lowell's Americanism and democracy must needs be somewhat apologetic if it is accurate. It must be heavily tinged with regret that so variously gifted and high-principled a man, with so great an opportunity, accomplished so little, after the emancipation conflict was over. But I have not written this paper in order to revel in the romantic sense of what might have been. I believe there existed in Lowell an unusual blend of qualities, temperamental, acquired, emotional, and intellectual—of qualities, each precious in itself, and all together constituting an ideal pattern of the democratic statesman's character. It would be futile to enumerate all these qualities. We may call one group of them *moral idealism* and the other *common sense* and the *readiness to compromise*. The point is that both groups are necessary, that they seem to contradict each other, that few persons have an adequate supply of either, and very few indeed a well-balanced blend of both. By nature Lowell had the well-balanced blend. On the side of idealism he felt that no expediency stands ahead of a fundamental human right, that compromise in the wrong area poisoned American politics and caused the Civil War. He believed in democratic government because he thought of it as a means of implementing the idealism of human brotherhood. He tested democracy by its power to produce and recognize leaders of lofty character—Lincoln and Emerson—and by its success in improving the lot of the average man. He said that political compromise ought never to extend to a moral issue and should be restricted to party policy or picking out the strategic time and place for an action. He put the matter rather wittily: "Compromise is an excellent umbrella, but a very poor roof."

On the other hand Lowell knew that idealists are often impossible doctrinaires and fanatics, and sometimes loathsome dispensers of cant. He admired Lincoln because Lincoln could bide his time.

Lincoln's democratic fervor was balanced by patience, humor, and practical sense. The responsible statesman must not keep his vision so fixed on the distant goal that he stumbles into a chasm in the path before him. Delays and indirections force themselves upon him. Lowell's imagination enabled him to appreciate this balancing trait in the make-up of

Lincoln (a trait that—fortunately for Great Britain and the world—exists in good measure in Winston Churchill).

Wrote Lowell:

> It is by presence of mind in untried emergencies that the native metal of a man is tested; it is by the sagacity to see, and the fearless honesty to admit, whatever truth there may be in an adverse opinion, in order more convincingly to expose the fallacy that lurks behind it, that a reasoner gains for his mere statement of fact the force of argument; it is by a wise forecast which allows hostile combinations to go so far as by the inevitable reaction to become elements of his own power, that a politician proves his genius for statecraft; and especially it is by so gently guiding public sentiment that he seems to follow it, by so yielding doubtful points that he can be firm without seeming obstinate in essential ones, and thus gain the advantages of compromise without the weakness of concession; by so instinctively comprehending the temper and prejudices of a people as to make them gradually conscious of the superior wisdom of his freedom from temper and prejudice,—it is by qualities such as these that a magistrate shows himself worthy to be chief in a commonwealth of free men. And it is for qualities such as these that we firmly believe History will rank Mr. Lincoln among the most prudent of statesmen and the most successful of rulers.

Nature gave Lowell a generous endowment of blended idealism and sagacity. If only these qualities had been sharpened and focused by participation in practical politics, Lowell's social philosophy might have been comprehensive and fundamental, his democracy might have been unequivocal, and his influence on the destiny of America might have been of historical importance.

THE DECLINE OF THE INVESTMENT BANKER

By PAUL M. SWEEZY

THE GROWTH of Big Business in the last quarter of the nineteenth century brought to the fore a new figure in American life, the investment banker. With the domineering elder J. P. Morgan as prototype, the American investment banker became internationally famous, revered or reviled, feared or hated, as the very symbol of concentrated economic power. To the press, to Congressional Committees, to the public at large, it was the investment banker who was the overlord of the new economic order of trusts and banks and imperial adventure and international intrigue.

The picture was, as all such pictures must be, somewhat overdrawn; but it was not without a solid foundation in the bedrock of economic fact. The investment banker, combining the roles of promoter, financier and bond salesman, had been largely instrumental in building up, reorganizing and consolidating the nation's vast railroad network in the 1880's and '90's. Entering the industrial field after the long depression of the '90's, he was the outstanding figure in the great wave of promotions and combinations which culminated in the crisis of 1907; he took the lead in financing the victors in the World War of 1914-18; during the prosperity of the '20's he again turned his hand to promoting mergers and combinations, with still unconcentrated fields like public utilities, automobiles, food processing and retail distribution as his main sphere of activity, but without in the least neglecting the older fields of railroads and heavy industry. By 1929 he exercised sway over what were absolutely, if not relatively, larger aggregations of capital than ever before.

The picture of the investment banker firmly seated on the throne of economic empire has become so deeply implanted in all our minds that it is difficult to realize that in the short space of a single decade he has suffered a dramatic eclipse, and that such power as he still retains is largely rooted in a past that is gone forever. Yet such is unquestionably the case,

and a proper analysis of our present-day economy demands that we face the fact and seek to understand its implications.

So far as the declining importance of investment banking is concerned, the main facts are plain and well known to the financial community. New large-scale promotions and mergers, which have always been the chief source of profit and power to the investment banker, have been virtually nonexistent since 1930. For this and other reasons, the traffic in new securities, and therewith the potential field for investment banking activity, has been drastically curtailed. Moreover, the overwhelming proportion of new securities, running up to 75 per cent in some years, has been issued for refunding purposes; that is to say, the new securities have merely replaced old securities which have matured or been called. Refunding operations are for the most part of a routine nature; they neither require special skill from the investment banker nor offer him a strategic opportunity to extend his power over the issuing corporations. Finally, and perhaps most significantly, an ever larger part of even this reduced business in new securities has been altogether circumventing the traditional investment banking channels through the device of what is known as "private placement." Securities are privately placed when they are sold directly by the issuing corporation to a group of institutional investors, which usually means in practice to a group of life insurance companies, without the aid or participation of the investment banker. An item on the financial page of the New York Times of November 28 tells the story in this respect with concise eloquence: "Formal announcements will be made today of no less than four separate private placements of new securities involving $145,720,000. To say that these private sales, particularly the $140,000,000 American Telephone and Telegraph deal, is a stunning blow to the underwriting community is putting it mildly." When we recall that A. T. & T. was taken over in its infancy and nursed to its present enormous size under the guiding and controlling hand of J. P. Morgan & Co., once the greatest investment banker of them all, we get an illuminating insight into the hard times on which the trade has currently fallen.

The decline in business, which has just been sketched, has of course been reflected in the composition of the investment banking community. Many of the largest and most active houses, which were set up as subsidiaries by the great commercial banks during the '20's, simply folded

up when the Banking Act of 1934 decreed a divorce of investment from deposit banking. Several firms, long active in the field, have found it expedient to merge their interests in order to cut out unnecessary duplication of facilities. Most significantly of all, J. P. Morgan & Co. itself, when presented by the Banking Act of 1934 with the alternatives of giving up its deposit or its investment banking business, chose to abandon the latter. A new firm, Morgan, Stanley & Co., Inc. was established to carry on the investment banking business, but J. P. Morgan & Co. itself, along with all but one of its leading partners, saw the handwriting on the wall and elected to desert the field in which it had won international fame and power in favor of one which had long been regarded as merely a side line. Today, if one looks through the roster of investment bankers one finds mostly unknowns or has-beens but very few who play a leading role in the business world.

What are the underlying reasons for the decline of the investment banker? Businessmen, with their customary propensity to seek for causes on the surface of things, have been inclined to lay the blame on the Securities Act of 1933 and on the Securities and Exchange Commission's administration of that legislation. These factors doubtless have played a part, but even in their absence it is inconceivable that the trend of events could have been significantly different. Looking beneath the surface, we can discern four causal influences at work which, operating in close coordination, may be regarded as controlling:

1) A sharp decline in the pace of economic expansion and an unwonted paucity of important new industries have been responsible for a drastic contraction of the traditional field of investment banking activity.

2) Such expansion as has taken place, and such new industries as have been developed, have been from the outset under the control of already existent large corporations disposing of vast internal financial resources and hence under no need to resort extensively to the capital market.

3) The rapid growth of institutional investment, particularly of life insurance, straight through the depression years has completely transformed the buyers' side of the market for new securities. Studies by the Temporary National Economic Committee have shown that the greatest part of even those securities which are still distributed by investment bankers soon gravitates into the portfolios of institutional investors. Un-

der these circumstances, it is clear that the growth of the simple and direct method of private placement is inevitable.

4) The Federal Government, particularly through the Reconstruction Finance Corporation but also through other agencies set up under the New Deal, is performing more and more of the financial functions which once required the services of the investment banker. This is most dramatically illustrated by the financing of plant expansion under the "defense" program in which the government is playing the leading role and the investment banker a very minor part, at least up to the present.

A careful consideration of the implications of these basic tendencies in our economic life will make it plain that the decline of investment banking must be attributed in large measure to a simple atrophy of functions. The potential field for investment banking has shrunk, and the business which is left is being carried on to an increasing extent by new methods and by new agencies better suited to the task.

One further question must be raised, though to answer it satisfactorily within the compass of a short article would manifestly be impossible. Who has fallen heir to the leadership and power which once vested in the investment banker?

In one sense, it is clearly too soon to be able to answer this question with anything approaching finality. J. P. Morgan & Co. still exercises an enormous power which was *acquired* in investment banking, though the firm itself no longer operates in the field. It is probably even true to say that J. P. Morgan & Co. is still the focal point of the greatest economic power in American society; and this situation will doubtless persist until the older generation of businessmen, who now occupy most of the positions of authority, passes from the scene. Relationships which have been established over a long period of time do not simply disappear when the factors which were responsible for them are suddenly removed. Nevertheless, it is not impossible to discern some of the outlines of the situation which is shaping up for the future.

In the first place, it is clear that the expansion of the economic functions of government will place an increasingly large share of economic power and responsibility in the hands of those who control the state. In other words, we are moving in the direction of State Capitalism, which may be defined as a society which is entirely capitalist in its class structure but in which there is a high degree of political centralization of economic

power. Needless to say, certain other countries, notably Germany, Italy and Japan, have already gone further along this road than we have. Also needless to say, there could be no more serious error than mistaking this for a trend toward socialism, though it does undeniably prepare the way for socialism in certain important respects.

Secondly, within the business community itself two tendencies are apparent. On the one hand, there has been a consolidation and extension of the scope of industrial empires based on family ownership and control of key corporations and banks. Family control is frequently buttressed by such relatively new devices as trust funds and endowed institutions for educational, scientific or charitable purposes. In this connection the recent revelation by the Temporary National Economic Committee that 13 families own $2,700,000,000 worth of stock in the country's 200 largest nonfinancial corporations is significant, though it is a long way from telling the whole story. It is in a sense ironical that the family, which once was the basic unit for all economic activity and the guarantee of some degree of economic equality and security, has lost most of its pristine economic functions and acquired one new one, namely that of fostering and consolidating the inequality of economic power. This whole subject needs much more study than has yet been devoted to it. The second tendency within the business community is less clear, but it appears that there is developing a more or less stabilized, and hence closed and self-perpetuating, group of corporate executives (including bank and insurance company executives) which is to an increasing degree engrossing the key positions in those corporations which are owned not by particular family groups, but rather by the capitalist class at large. This incidentally seems to be what is meant by the "democratization of ownership" which we have heard so much about in the last twenty years or so.

So far as the location of private economic power is concerned it is clear that both of the tendencies noted point in the direction of a merger of financial and industrial interests. The dominance of financial over industrial capital, which for a while was widely interpreted as a more or less permanent state of affairs, is thus seen to have been a temporary stage of capitalist development, a stage which was characterized above all else by the *process* of forming trusts, combinations, and huge corporations. It was this process itself which thrust the financier forward, and now that it has been substantially completed the latter ceases to play a *special*

role in the economic life of the country. In general terms the decline of investment banking is merely the outward manifestation of an inevitable adjustment.

A more difficult problem concerns the relation of the trend to State Capitalism on the one hand and the tendencies in progress within the business community on the other. It has been generally held, and particularly among businessmen, that we have to do here with a fundamental conflict. This idea, however, is certainly an illusion which has its origins in the rather special circumstances surrounding the New Deal. The severity of the depression of 1929-33 shook the structure of the American economy to its very foundations; a policy of reform and concessions, involving greatly increased government activity in the economic sphere, became the only possible way of saving the system itself. The carrying through of this policy, necessarily under progressive and at times even radical slogans, created a split in the capitalist class. In perspective, however, it is now possible to see clearly that this split was of a temporary character. The advance to a new period of greatly intensified imperialist conflict and threat to the capitalist system on a world scale quickly closed the breach. "Reform" has given way to "defense"; the policy of concessions has been scrapped; and the representatives of big business have been called in to take charge of the government's economic functions. Private economic power and public economic power are now rapidly being concentrated in the same group. It is probably safe to assume that this state of affairs will continue to obtain for some time to come. It may even be that it will prove to be as durable as the capitalist system itself.

PHILOSOPHY AND SOCIAL CHANGE

By GEORGE R. GEIGER

IT IS NOT STRANGE that men have come to apply to philosophy that most deflating of current words, "escapism." To be sure, escapism is just another way of saying, "I don't like it." But it is being said now with a different accent, one implying that every voice which does not sing a song of social significance—and sing it in a certain key—betokens a fugitive from reality. Thus, the scale runs from swing music, bridge, and alcohol on the one extreme to symbolic logic, astronomy, and classical economics on the other (not to mention all the more old-fashioned kinds of ivory tower, like metaphysics and epistemology). Escapism has become a blanket term, covering alike the quick and the dead.

To label philosophy "escapist" seems, therefore, to be at least rhetorically unfortunate. That is to say, there undoubtedly *is* a lot of hocus-pocus to this business of philosophy: to brand great areas of it as defeatist and remote is completely justified. But to do more than that is to show a serious want of discrimination, for philosophy is catholic enough to include the most realistic and subtle sensitivity to the socal scene, as well as the most flabby and tepid moral pabulum. Therefore this discussion may well break into two parts, the first suggesting why philosophy has been rendered suspect in, say, certain liberal circles, and the second proposing an historical interpretation which will allow (or rather force) philosophy to enter the arena of social conflict.

I

The polite raising of eyebrows that greets the student or teacher who confesses to a traffic with it is mute testimony that somehow philosophy is "different." The inquiring smile occasionally denotes respect, even awe, for there are still those who are dutifully impressed by the inscrutable. But, much more frequently, the smile is one of good-natured contempt (sometimes a little less than good-natured). These latter arched eyebrows belong to the emancipated, to the free souls who know quite well that

humbug is just humbug. Of course, philosophy itself has been to a greater or less degree responsible for its equivocal reception. It has taken for its own the province of the abstract and of the concept. Its vocabulary and syntax, when not downright meaningless, have been belligerently formidable. Its professed subject-matter has been studded with the most amazingly broad and esoteric questions, questions which not always have implied profundity.

Then there are the more serious of the free souls. For them, not the inscrutability but the ineffectuality of philosophy has been its damnation. Has it not often given them resounding phrases and tricky dialectic and moral opium when they have approached with their tragically sincere questions? These questions, it is true, have not been characteristically about the dear delights of philosophy. They have been questions more sordid, more earthly, downright inelegant, dealing with grubby things like poverty and war, tyranny and ignorance, incompetence and waste.

But, after all, what have these problems to do with philosophy? Philosophy is an august and privileged discipline; the material it considers is refined, insulated, precious—so it has been said. Or rather: these nasty inquiries men raise are handled by social and political philosophy, which is an adjunct of ethics, which is an adjunct of metaphysics—that core of all philosophic thinking. So philosophy can still remain aloof; its skirts are clean. It is this kind of traditional indifference to specific social ills and specific political programs, with its resulting rationalization of existing social and political programs and its sorry defeatism, that has made philosophy appear escapist. In a more technical sense it has been the classic concentration of philosophers upon "metaphysics" and all it implies for the mind educated in a culture dominated by science and social struggle that has so emphasized philosophic insularity. Can we account, then, for the historical path which philosophy has followed?

In any discussion of this problem, recognition must first be given to the origin and background of philosophic enterprise. For philosophy is not discarnate. Much as we like to think so, it did not spring full-armed from the head of our favorite philosopher. It is not the happy outcome of some virgin birth. Philosophy has a natural history behind it; it is part of human culture. An observation such as this should be superfluous. Certainly it would be were we discussing the nature and function of science or of history. No one could possibly understand, or indeed would

try to understand, the schools of history or the evolution of scientific methods without appreciating their cultural backgrounds. The assumption here will be that this same procedure applies to philosophy. It is a human activity functioning in some specific and recognizable pattern of culture.

To be consistent this essay should consequently be an examination of the cultural background of philosophic systems—of course, a palpably impossible task. But the least we can suggest here is to indicate how a few of the dominant characteristics of philosophic speculation, particularly those which have been labeled escapist and "metaphysical," may be traced to the conditions which surrounded its birth and growth. Fortunately, this discussion can be narrowed to reasonable limits because, first, it would appear that the major emphases of traditional philosophy—at least in terms of long-time trends—have remained largely the same for some two thousand years; and, secondly, these emphases do seem clearly to be the product of a definite period of early culture.

The argument here may be summarily stated in some such fashion as this: The long-time philosophic interest has been (1) to discover a way of knowing that is sure, universal, and revelatory; and (2) to discover a form of reality that is absolute, trustworthy, and the source and preserver of human good. These dominant interests have been captured in Dewey's pregnant phrase, "the quest for certainty." Such a tradition of philosophy, the argument continues, must be understood as a striking illumination of a background defined by conditions the very reverse of these philosophic aims—a background dark, uncertain, fraught with peril and mystery, the setting, in other words, of a primitive and prescientific culture. This bald statement must be elaborated.

The elaboration would have to be, first of all, anthropological. That is to say, it would recognize that the elemental roots of philosophy stretch down into the very dawn of human consciousness. This proto-philosophy was clearly a means for propitiating a forbidding and unintelligible environment. Gods, taboos, animism, mana were all techniques for achieving security. They were means for reading order and comprehension into a whirling flux, for introducing stability into a fugitive background. But, propitiated or not, the hazardous and the uncertain remained. Worship and ritual alone could not build fires—although they might summon to action the ever present Spirit of Flame. Wood and kindling and sparks had to be present, too. Yet this realm of wood and kindling

and sparks—this embryonic world of the arts and sciences—was still of an inferior status. For its problems were not always solved; in it there were frustration and failure. The animal did not always fall in the hunt. But in the hunting of the gods there were no misses.

To be sure, all this is a rather presumptuous oversimplification. Yet its main emphases seem to be sound, historically and anthropologically. Those emphases are to the effect that philosophy has developed in the same general area in which were found myth and poetic drama, religion and worship. Science and the practical arts developed in a different direction. That difference in direction is crucial. It seems traceable to the realization by early man that his overt activity—the activity of the hunt, of the making of fire—is always uncertain. The craftsman, the artisan, tries his best, but his instruments are refractory, his senses incomplete and untrustworthy, his results—although often startling—can never be guaranteed. The problems he works with are often too much for him. His knowledge is imperfect, and his materials also. In truth, therefore, he is working in an inferior, a secondary, realm. And this is the dimension of the practical arts and crafts, later, of science and technology.

So there must be another area in which man does not have to distrust himself. Here there need be no bungling with the crude material world, here knowledge is complete and self-sufficient. For in this other realm knowledge means something entirely different from the knowledge of the artisan. His world is located in dealings with specific problems as they arise, but there is a purer world, a mental or spiritual world where one can breathe a cleaner air. (This too, too cleaner air should be the oxygen of our colleges and universities—if our new-model, streamlined, Mortimer Adlerized, versions of the Angelic Doctor are to be believed.) This is perforce the "real" world, one of certainty and remoteness, to approach which demands a different and higher method of knowing. Such knowing—to be called philosophical or metaphysical—is precisely to reveal this real world, to give access to it, to contemplate it, not, to be sure, to change it. Instead of being a supreme productive art, knowledge must be reflective and revelatory of the supernatural—supernatural because the antecedently real is forever before and above the world of mere sense data. Repose in the finality of this real world is the goal of real knowledge, of philosophy. As John Dewey puts it, "we long, amid a troubled world, for perfect being."

Now, it seems entirely plausible that this split between two different worlds of being and two different techniques of knowing (a split which, of course, has been captured for all time by the classic allegory of Plato's cave) can be attributed to the class structure of ancient times. Certainly in Greece we find the most startling illustration of this kind of dualism. The historical essays of Dewey are perhaps the most incisive treatment of this whole problem, but social and economic historians of all schools, Marxist or not, have paid concentrated attention to the effects that a Greek leisure class, supported by a slave and artisan class, have had upon the history of Western philosophy. The Greek philosopher's scorn for manual labor is familiar enough to be almost comic. We read with amusement that even the godlike sculptors, whose work has made the term "classic" all but a synonym for ancient Greek, were disdained as merely craftsmen, as artisans who used not their pure reason but their lowly hands. The practical, the material, the sense world just did not count—at least in relation to philosophy, to "real" knowledge. Thus, the breath-taking audacity of Plato in insuring that his philosopher-kings would study astronomy but let the stars alone! If all this does not seem like the rationalizing of a dominant leisure class, then social history needs to be rewritten.

This argument must not be misunderstood. There is nothing *wrong* in this kind of rationalizing or self-justification. Every class in power does it, be they primitive medicine men, or Brahmin priests, or Athenian high-minded gentlemen, or English *bourgeoisie* of the nineteenth century, or —a good bet—the proletariat at the end of the twentieth century. The point is simply that this self-glorification must be understood for what it is. For example, we point out constantly that liberalism and *laissez faire* can be fully appreciated only as the rationalizing of a rising commercial class coming into opposition with a controlling landed aristocracy. This, of course, does not mean that liberalism, therefore, is either wrong or right. But it does mean that when we use the concept of liberalism today we should know its antecedents, and should realize that the word does not, and cannot possibly, mean the same thing now that it did a century ago. A similar approach might well be followed in discussing the concepts of philosophy; there would then be less danger of making philosophy today mean just what it did for an age which preceded the rise of experimental inquiry.

For experimental inquiry has introduced a revolution which has

almost completely negated the traditional "quest for certainty." Specifically has there been repudiated the interpretation of knowledge which makes it revelatory of some monolithic reality, fixed and absolute. This perhaps requires brief elaboration.[1]

It should be familiar that science is not constituted by any particular body of material. The word "method" is crucial. In fact, the conviction that method is more important than conclusion is the very essence of scientific experimentalism. Historically it was indeed this concentration upon technique that provided the magic to transform out of a supernatural theology and philosophy what we now know as physical science. Yet no worship of physical science is intended by such an observation. Nor does the experimental method mean the carrying on of a certain specified laboratory routine, for all aspects of experience are equally real and they demand their own treatments. Neither is experimentalism limited to the use of tricky machinery. In its widest sense, the experimental method signifies opposition to fixed ends, to system-making and changelessness; it signifies a refusal to divorce thought from action. It stands for provisionalism and tentativeness, the reliance upon working hypotheses rather than upon immutable principles. In this way, science is by no means limited to the professional scientist; it represents an attitude that can function in any area of experience, an attitude of free and effective intelligence. The extension of such a temper would be indeed the "unified science" that is being sought in many circles.

Therefore, science cannot accept problems or the properties of objects—much less something called Reality—which are set up in advance of experimental operation, set up, that is to say, in terms of a certain and superior existence which is waiting only to be revealed. Scientific knowing implies the control and change of experienced objects, not their revelation. In Dewey's words, "any allegiance to even the smallest minimum of belief so fixed in advance that it can never be modified is unscientific." In short, scientific knowing, a "thumping-and-pushing" kind of knowing, is a way of experiencing objects which introduces a control over them. Indeed, that statement would be a synopsis of the history of experimental science. And this knowing implies an operational technique,

[1]The elaboration of some of these paragraphs has already appeared in the writer's chapter on Dewey's social and political philosophy in *The Philosophy of John Dewey* (Library of Living Philosophy, Northwestern University, 1939).

one which substitutes data for objects. Thus, the value of knowledge depends upon the way in which it is reached; and that way, as we have noted, involves provisionalism, practical activity, and the ("metaphysical") assumption that nature reacts to manipulation, that it is not unchanging and aloof. The supreme value of scientific knowing turns out to be the "supremacy of method," whereas the supreme value of classic philosophic knowing was its quest for certainty.

II

Now, the present essay is not so much interested in an exposition of scientific method or in the cultural background of the history of traditional philosophy. It is interested in what may *now* be regarded as the function of philosophy; but it is felt sincerely that these first two points have been necessary as background and orientation.

The major argument, then, can be expressed along these lines: First, from a negative standpoint, the business of philosophy is not to construct a picture of nature which is to rival that given us by science, for, despite Dr. Adler and his medievalists, philosophy can lay no claim to some "extra superfine" brand of knowledge having its own peculiar privileges and warrants. From a positive approach, the purpose of philosophy seems to be (1) to examine and criticize scientific method, particularly in terms of disclosing the significance, possibly unrecognized, of certain basic problems and assumptions; (2) to help extend the experimental method to fields, such as the social sciences, for example, where that method has not been sufficiently understood or trusted; and (3) above all, to apply the experimental operation to problems of values, so as to help break down the truly tragic barrier between the physical and the moral realms; in other words, "to help put beliefs about the nature of things and beliefs about values together."

Without recalling the familiar textbook discussions of the relations between philosophy and science, it still may be appropriate to group these three positive functions under the general heading of philosophy-and-science. For that seemingly innocuous and academic label may help catalogue what can well be the most shattering puzzle human intelligence is called upon to face, a riddle of the Sphinx which not to answer means to be destroyed. It is the glaring failure of the human mind to solve, or even to understand, the problems which, by a miracle of understatement, have

come to be known simply as "social problems"—questions of ethics, of values, of judgment and choice, fundamental questions concerning themselves with nothing less than war and poverty and human disaster.

The gloomy collapse of reflective thinking in this whole area is principally a methodological one, and it has impressed men like John Dewey probably more than has any other human phenomenon. The incredible gap between technological advance and the application of that advance to the moral scene is nothing less than the almost deliberate abdication of intelligence from an entire dimension, and the most precious, too, of human experience. After all, it is no secret why there have been fantastic revolutions in the development of physical science; any good history book will report the reasons. Man has finally learned to use experimental inquiry in the fields that have now come to be designated as "scientific." It is gratuitous to add that these fields were not indigenously "scientific," or that they indeed *became* "scientific" as they responded to the employment of a technique. The point here to lament is the divorce of such a recognized method from social and ethical problems. The unbelievable lag in referring the recognized scientific attitude to disciplines other than the natural studies is so commonplace that it has become the occasion for good-natured humor. We are indeed confronted with what, in another setting, Lewis Mumford has called a pseudomorph—a cultural hangover. We seem not be worried that, outside of the recognized natural sciences, much of our "thinking" is in a pre-Baconian if not a pre-Copernican stage. It is exactly this fatal hesitation that has so profoundly disturbed a whole generation of thinkers.

Therefore, it would appear that one of the great tasks of philosophy today is to act, in a sense, as a communicating agency between the scientific techniques and the values that man has set before himself. This would be a genuine relation between philosophy and science. It does not mean that philosophy would act simply as a mechanical link. It would function in both spheres, being identified with neither. In terms of an insistence upon methodology, upon the means and significance of experimental inquiry and active intelligence, philosophy would coincide with much of the work of science; whereas in terms of a concern with basic meanings, with values, with the enlargement of horizons, philosophy would be more nearly a thing of vision, of perspective and imagination. It is this kind of functional connection that is vital. Here philosophy would achieve

a real synthesis of the sciences, not in some Spencerian sense of wrapping all the separate bundles of the sciences into one big package with a single, appropriate label, but in making science operative in solving the grand, the tragic, questions. We can have no single "system" of unified science, except "in the sense of a systematic attack upon problems and a systematic use of whatever material we have available."

This kind of a relation between philosophy and science makes certain assumptions. First, it will be evident that the critical approach of philosophy must operate within a living culture and be most consciously aware of the problems of its own background. This is why philosophy must concern itself jointly with the problems of scientific method and of the social world, for it is with them unquestionably that modern culture must deal—philosophy aiding or not. Basic problems can be solved only in terms of the setting in which they arise. If philosophy is to deepen and sharpen our awareness of genuinely fundamental problems, they must be relevant ones.

A second observation, really a corollary of the first, is that this critical function of philosophy is one of evaluation. It is nothing new, of course, to argue that philosophy should discuss values; they have been its distinctive subject-matter ever since philosophy became articulate. The point here is to emphasize that values must be discussed consciously and carefully. True, philosophy may always have talked about values, but so often the philosophers seemed to have been unaware of the very set of standards which made them talk the way they did. Now, when it is suggested that philosophy's direction must be toward values, there should not arise the easy delusion that the "right" philosophy will give us the "right" system of values. Instead, this emphasis means no more—and also, quite definitely, no less—than that philosophy must present, in this area of values, a technique of criticism. To help clarify the meaning and significance of value problems, above all to appraise them in terms of their consequences, to see how they work and where they function—this must be the grubby and "semantical" work of philosophy, a work as pedestrian yet as shattering as that of any great intellectual revolution.

A third assumption of this view of philosophy is, to be sure, a heightened sensitivity to the dominance of social philosophy. There is no occasion here to defend the "social reform" approach, especially to show that it does not derogate from the dignity of philosophy. Yet it may be put

down once more that unless our experience of values—the things we have judged to be precious and worth choosing—and our experience (scientific or metaphysical or mystical) of "the world" can come together, we are indeed lost. The integration of nature, human or nonhuman, with the purposes and meanings conceived by man seems to be the great problem, not merely of philosophy—which, after all, is pretty academic—but the great problem of human intelligence itself. This last assumption of philosophy's "social significance" perhaps deserves further elaboration here.

It was William James who phrased one of the most poetic descriptions of philosophy when he termed it a name for unanswered questions. That phrasing well suggests the fascination which has been forever attached to the philosophic enterprise, the fascination of playing with profound riddles whose solutions are not waiting at the back of the book. But of much more weight in such a description is the implied challenge. For what are the unanswered questions that today shriek for attention? They no longer reside—if they ever did—in "sterile metaphysics and sterile epistemology"; neither are they inhabitants of some completely formal realm of sign-manipulation. In social relations and conflicts, in political and economic struggles, in a depressed ethics and a fumbling education, in war and peace and revolution—here are to be found the questions that plead for answers. The failure to answer them, even to notice them, is the tragic and, it may well be, fatal indictment of human intelligence. If philosophy is indeed the name for unanswered questions, then this is its field.

Thus, social philosophy can claim to be the heart of all philosophy. It can make this claim in two ways. First, as has just been noted, social philosophy is linked with the very genesis of all philosophic enterprise—the concern with "questions of the most perplexing and significant sort." The second way in which social philosophy presents its claim is methodological and historical. That is to say, an examination of the history of philosophy and, above all, of the development of scientific method should throw a flood of light on the extraordinary insolvency of much of our social thinking. This bankruptcy of great sections of economic and political speculation may indeed be traced to the point of view that regards intelligence as revelatory instead of as instrumental; the social disciplines seem to have followed the lead of traditional "philosophy" rather than

that of "science." Here is where a living philosophy can perform the liaison function that has been suggested in this essay, the function of relating the techniques of scientific method to the whole area of human values. Above all, philosophy can point to what is implied by instrumentalism, by the experimental method. Its pointing might indicate some such path as this:

The installation of an experimental method would indeed constitute a true Copernican revolution in social and political philosophy because it would dislocate the orbit of social speculation which to so great an extent is now centered in fixed concepts and bound to them by what Dewey has termed "the logic of general notions." General notions and universal principles end investigation instead of initiating it. (Especally do they end it in favor of the *status quo*.) But the demand of experimentalism is always for the specific formulation and diagnosis of problems, for data, for provisional multiple-working hypotheses, for the testing of beliefs by consequences, for empirical verification. More than anything else, such an approach requires that programs cannot be determined in advance. This is fundamental. It does not mean—as caricaturists would have it mean—that the instrumentalist starts from a vacuum with no concepts and theories whatsoever. It does mean that concepts and theories be used as tools of inquiry to advance investigation instead of to block it. It does mean that programs of action be regarded as working hypotheses to be supported or repudiated, as they are in the natural sciences, by the consequences which follow.

This may all sound plausible if dull. But the acceptance of such a policy would remove from social and political philosophy some of our most cherished playthings. It would make thinking in this field a matter of gathering prosaic facts and putting forward tentative and halting explanations, risking them to ridicule and collapse at every moment, accepting their collapse and trying other solutions—all of which would be considered by many thinkers as dreadfully dreary and grubby business, quite different from that warm and pleasing irrelevance of after-dinner conversation which constitutes so much of our social consciousness. It would mean, in short, a revolution in thought just as middle-class and unspectacular, but just as stupendous, as the revolution in industry of a century ago.

It would mean also an end of the too easy strictures that have been directed against "science" because of its alleged responsibility for the world tragedy in which man today finds himself. This is in no way an apology or whitewash for the very evident sins of the natural scientists. Indeed, it is only within the last few desperate years that the men of science seem to be rousing themselves to what is going on about them, although even that rousing has done all too little to disturb seriously the prevailing lethargy. The general imperviousness to questions of values still remains. But that is a theme of its own which can profitably be handled elsewhere. The present argument is turned to the philosophers rather than to the natural or social scientists, and it is pointing to the *method* of science. Any wholesale indictment of "science" therefore should be changed, its attention redirected to the unthinkable stupidity of using scientific *method* to extend interests which preceded its rise instead of to modify men's social acts and attitudes. The benefits of science have not been spread out; and in this conflict between prescientific ideas and postscientific realities has been nourished a struggle more portentous than any in economic history. In fact, it is not simply democracy or capitalism that is now on trial in the world. That would be almost too simple a problem. Collective intelligence itself is at stake. The great scientific revolution is still to come.

For the moment, that revolution seems far distant. Indeed, a counter-revolution seems now aflame. In no other way can we describe, even in allegedly democratic circles, the distrust of critical thinking, of provisional hypotheses, of the specific—perhaps piecemeal—handling of specific problems, of patience which is truly reflective and exploratory—in a word, the distrust of liberalism and democracy. This is not the place for one more excursion in defense of such ideas, especially since, if we are to be at all consistent, their defense would have to be in terms of methodology. And one can't drum up much of a peroration on methods. This is no place either for one more jeremiad. The apostles of pessimism are sufficiently eloquent, and almost they persuade us. At least, one cannot forbear noting the too neat correlation between contemporary impatience with instrumentalism and contemporary seduction by dialectic. From neoscholastic theories of education to neopagan worship of godlike leaders and god-created states, punctuated by—save the mark—dialectical materialism, there is the cry for soothing concepts. Let us, above all, be comfortable in

our minds! Experimentalism is distinctly unsatisfying and discomforting, for it gives us nothing to which to hold fast except a dry-bones method, halting, tentative, vacillating. It is the typical philosophy of liberalism, and no more need be said. And if this be totalitarianism, let us make the most of it!

This apparent revolt against an instrumentalist philosophy is something more than a reaction to any single thinker, say, to John Dewey. It is part of a larger movement, a movement which is the current expression of the tender-minded retreat. That escape has taken many forms, all of them showing little stomach for the incorrigible toughness which refuses to succumb to formulas, all of them distrustful of criticism and analysis, in fine, of scientific method. The success or failure of that revolt can be predicted only in terms of our present mood. But unless we are blackly pessimistic, it is certainly premature to foretell the permanent abdication of reflective thinking—even from international relations.

* * *

All this, then, seems to be implied by the assumption that philosophy today must mean social philosophy. Here are the relevant, the screamingly relevant, questions: here are the unanswered, and crying-for-answers, questions. Here is the locus of man's most precious values—those found in free thinking and free enjoyment, in human dignity and decency and intelligence. Here is the shadow-land where methods of thinking have stumbled.

Philosophy is now confronted by as serious a dilemma as any human enterprise has ever faced. If the brutalitarian way of life emerges as definitive from the present world convulsion, philosophy becomes meaningless. But if the scheme of life which, with such typically Anglo-Saxon understatement, we call "democratic" survives, philosophy will still be under a cloud unless in some way it has helped to realize or to define that kind of life. If it keeps its hands immaculate—and in some circles it seems pathetically eager to do just that—then it is indeed the luxury for the idle that has always aroused suspicion, the way of dishonorable escape. Men must make fundamental choices these days as perhaps they never have made them before. If it is not too late, philosophy must choose along with them.

FAULKNER AND THE SOUTH

By WARREN BECK

ALTHOUGH for more than a decade William Faulkner's successive novels have made a conspicuous contribution to American literature, their extraordinary values, both artistic and sociological, have yet to be recognized. Faulkner's searching view of life has not always been rightly and fully understood; furthermore, the novels' wide base in Southern history and present-day society, and the author's profoundly philosophical interpretation of that history and society, have not been appreciated.

William Faulkner grew up in the South, and of the South. He was born in Mississippi, of a distinguished family which had included governors and generals and one man of letters. After two years at the University of Mississippi, Faulkner joined the Canadian Flying Corps, gained the rank of lieutenant, and saw service in France, bringing down two enemy planes, and himself suffering two crashes, in one of which his foot was injured. After the war he traveled in Europe and sojourned briefly in New Orleans, but he returned to Oxford, Mississippi, where he has lived ever since. He has not cut himself off from his roots; instead he has attempted to penetrate and utilize those aspects of life presented him by heritage and circumstance.

Faulkner's conspicuous melancholy seems to have been contributed to by two wars—not only the first World War, but the American Civil War. His disillusionment was indicated in his first novel, *Soldiers' Pay,* with its ghastly portrait of the disfigured flier's return and his frivolous sweetheart's revulsion and infidelity. Intensification of melancholy by World War experiences may be traced also in a short story, "Ad Astra." Herein the concept attributed by Hemingway to Gertrude Stein—"You are all a lost generation"—recurs in a still more somber form; Faulkner's character remarks, "All this generation which fought in the war are dead tonight. But we do not yet know it." And in another story, "All the Dead Pilots," Faulkner himself says that

> all the old pilots dead on the eleventh of November . . . swaggered hard and drank hard because they had found that being dead was not as quiet as they had heard it would be.

In their composite experience, Faulkner says, "there stood into sight the portent and the threat of what the race could bear and become."

The most profound generalization of this war-born melancholy is in the description in *Sartoris* of Narcissa Benbow contemplating the boyhood miniature of John Sartoris, her husband Bayard's twin brother, shot down over the western front in 1918:

> And as Narcissa held the small oval in her hand while the steady blue eyes looked quietly back at her and from the whole face among its tawny curls, with its smooth skin and child's mouth, there shone like a warm radiance something sweet and merry and wild, she realized as she never had before the blind tragedy of human events. And while she sat motionless with the medallion in her hand and Miss Jenny thought she was looking at it, she was cherishing the child under her own heart with all the aroused constancy of her nature: it was as though already she could discern the dark shape of that doom which she had incurred, standing beside her chair, waiting and biding its time.

In all Faulkner's novels this "dark shape of doom" is recognized as eternal and omnipresent. Faulkner is chronologically of that generation which went to the first World War when they were barely out of their teens, but he rapidly transcended the view which narrowed and paralyzed some of them, that this catastrophe was unique, a special fate victimizing them as no other men before them had been victimized. In *Sartoris* Faulkner makes Horace Benbow say, on his return from France, that within ten years individual ex-soldiers will "realize that the A. E. F. didn't invent disillusion." Faulkner's own reflective temperament seems to have risen almost at once above the special outlook of the "lost generation" and its attendant limitations.

To the sense of man's fate, sharpened by personal knowledge of war's violence, is added in Faulkner's make-up the consciousness of his native South's tragic history, with the interruption and wastage of its original culture, and its inheritance of economic and moral dilemmas. The real and complete Faulkner first stands out in his third novel, *Sartoris,* where the theme of the soldier's return from France is linked to the theme of the decay of an old Southern family, and of all the traditions which once supported it. As the South's dilemmas are apparently insoluble, so is memory of their precipitation in the Civil War inescapable. In Faulkner's novels the post-bellum South seems to stand like Lot's wife, petrified in a morbid backward glance at the holocaust consuming a damned people.

Considering this, the Canadian Shreve describes Quentin Compson's land as "a kind of vacuum filled with wraithlike and indomitable anger and pride and glory at and in happenings that occurred and ceased fifty years ago."

This view of the South, and the mood of his return to it, is one thing which sets off Faulkner from the rest of the literary lost generation. The man who had known war's horrors in his youth seems to have brought back an enlarged perspective which discerned the decadence of his native region while still holding to his associations with it. That confrontation, with its unavoidable demands both on sympathy and on judgment, must have created the dynamic tension so obvious in Faulkner's temperament—a tension productive, in the whole body of his work, of the reflectiveness which raises him so far above the inverted aestheticism of the post-war school of Hemingway. Faulkner is a Mississippian who has transcended provincialism without losing artistic devotion to a locale; he is a Southerner who has become disinterested without losing interest. No wonder he is melancholy; his is the excruciation of a Hamlet, forced to chide his own mother, on the grounds of his realistic discernment of fact and the demands of his indomitable idealism. And thus in the midst of his melancholy he has been able to grasp themes larger than those of his contemporaries.

Faulkner's detachment and judiciousness concerning the South are not completely shared by any of his characters, save perhaps Bayard at the close of *The Unvanquished*. Even Mr. Compson sees those of Civil War times as "people too as we are, and victims too as we are, but victims of a different circumstance, simpler and therefore, integer for integer, larger, more heroic and the figures therefore more heroic too, not dwarfed and involved but distinct, uncomplex," which leads him to call them "shadowy paragons," "possessing now heroic proportions." The most striking instance of ancestor-worship is in the significant character of Hightower, in *Light in August*. In the "final copper light of afternoon," the "lambent suspension of August," his life renews itself in recollections of his grandfather, a Confederate cavalryman killed in a raid at Jefferson. Hightower's boyhood had been meager of experience and his later life had been ruined by the scandalous failure of his marriage and his resultant ostracism, and so in the imaginative reconstruction of his grandfather's exploit he seeks intimations of the heroic, as redemption from the sordid-

ness around him. His addiction to this dream is a vice, however; he is ensnared in an habitual nostalgia which has helped shut him off from reality and constructive activity. Hightower's story suggests a stultification of Southern psychology, a self-insulation from issues presently confronting it.

As Faulkner shows it, this preoccupation with a cult existed before the Civil War and continued in a variety of degenerative imitations. An early effect of the South's immersion in its provincial illusions was the conferring of military command, says Faulkner, "by an absolute caste system" upon "generals who should not have been generals," who were without training or aptitude for learning, and who contributed to the loss of many battles by what old Bayard Sartoris calls, for its combination of valor and folly, "the goddamnedest army the world ever saw." In a post-bellum stage Southern complacency moves Mrs. Compson to declare that God would not permit certain things to happen to her, because she is a lady. In its secondary form of snobbery, the hallucination leads Temple Drake to assert again and again, as a demand for privilege and as talisman against evil, "My father's a judge"; and the tradition of gentility and gallantry reaches its final perversion in her drunken escort Gowan Stevens, who takes Temple into Goodwin's sinister farmhouse, gets himself knocked down in a quarrel over her "honor," and then deserts her, after which he can still write Narcissa Benbow a Byronic note (which shrewd Miss Jenny calls "a delicate operation on the human heart without anaesthetic") sentimentally consoling himself that he alone has suffered.

Certain other Faulkner characters, however, cannot flatter themselves with the unction of a decayed legend. Their consciousness of the South's real history and position is painfully acute; they have come individually to what Mr. Coldfield, in *Absalom, Absalom!*, foresaw as

> that day when the South would realize that it was now paying the price for having erected its economic edifice not on the rock of stern morality but on the shifting sands of opportunism and moral brigandage.

Hence what Rosa Coldfield feels as "fatality and curse on the South." Yet no matter how detached and judiciously critical Faulkner's Southerners become, most of them are still bound by their instinctive and habitual filial piety, and are not inclined to disown their infirm, corrupt mother. The hypersensitive Quentin Compson, conceiving of "the South, the deep South dead since 1865 and peopled with garrulous outraged baffled ghosts," thinks of himself as two separate Quentins, the one preparing for Har-

vard, and the one "still too young to deserve yet to be a ghost, but nevertheless having to be one for all that, since he was born and bred in the deep South." Thus, Faulkner says that

> he was not a being, an entity, he was a commonwealth. He was a barracks filled with stubborn back-looking ghosts still recovering, even forty-three years afterward, from the fever which had cured the disease, waking from the fever without even knowing that it had been the fever itself which they had fought against and not the sickness, looking with stubborn recalcitrance backward beyond the fever and into the disease with actual regret, weak from the fever yet free of the disease and not even aware that the freedom was that of impotence.

Quentin's Canadian-born Harvard roommate Shreve caustically remarks, "The South. Jesus. No wonder you folks all outlive yourselves by years and years and years." "Why do they live there?" asks Shreve. "Why do they live at all?" And on another occasion, "Jesus, the South is fine, isn't it. It's better than the theatre, isn't it. It's better than Ben Hur, isn't it. No wonder you have to come away now and then, isn't it." This collegiate jesting ironically emphasizes the mental torture of Quentin, who in *Absalom, Absalom!* has been witness in imagination, and the philosophical expositor, of Thomas Sutpen's overthrow by the South, and who sees in his own family, in *The Sound and the Fury,* the irredeemable products of a cycle of degeneration. Along with Benbow and Hightower and the Bayard Sartoris of *The Unvanquished,* Quentin Compson is undoubtedly one of his creator's chief representatives, and it is perhaps an echo of Faulkner himself at the close of *Absalom, Absalom!* when Quentin must cry out to himself the repeated assurance that he does not hate the South. Quentin's suicide is the escape of a fastidious mind from the horror and shame of life as his own family leads it. Significantly the Compson who best endures is the thirty-three year old idiot Ben; he bellows when the carriage takes an unaccustomed turn which presents an unfamiliar scene, but when the customary route is resumed, he sits quiet. Thus the final rut of decadent formality and tradition is symbolized in the closing sentence of *The Sound and the Fury*:

> The broken flower drooped over Ben's fist and his eyes were empty and blue and serene again as cornice and facade flowed smoothly once more from left to right; post and tree, window and doorway, and signboard, each in its ordered place.

Faulkner's most comprehensive view of the South's history is contained in the magnificently executed *Absalom, Absalom!*. Not only.

Thomas Sutpen's whole life is represented, from his boyhood in the 1820's to his death on his Mississippi plantation in 1869, but his story and subsequent events in the life of his family are reconstructed from observation and hearsay in 1910, so that the novel sketches almost a century, with the Civil War as its crisis, and with the dramatic arc of Sutpen's rise and fall as a graph of slavery's evil and the furious fatality of retribution.

Sutpen's original trouble, Quentin discovers through his father and grandfather, was innocence; as a poor white mountaineer he

> didn't even know there was a country all divided and fixed and neat with a people living on it all divided and fixed and neat because of what color their skins happened to be and what they happened to own.

(The irony is Quentin's, but certainly it is Faulkner's also, since no author can create an irony of a higher order than he himself shares.) At first the young Sutpen thinks that the luckier white men would be "slower and loather" than the unlucky to take advantage of their fortune of birth or to take credit for it, but he is disillusioned. When he is turned away from the front door of the big house where he has been sent on an errand, to his backwoods mind it is

> like he might have been sent with a lump of lead or even a few molded bullets so that the man who owned the fine rifle could shoot it, and the man came to the door and told him to leave the bullets on a stump at the edge of the woods, not even letting him come close enough to look at the rifle.

He knows that "something would have to be done about it; he would have to do something about it in order to live with himself for the rest of his life." At first he thinks of shooting the owner of the house (just as his father and other poor whites had relieved themselves by beating up a man simply because he was "that goddam son of a bitch Pettibone's nigger"). But young Sutpen is shrewd enough to make a tactical compromise; he tells himself "this ain't a question of rifles. So to combat them you have got to have what they have that made them do what the man did." In that thought is born Sutpen's lifelong and fatal complex, that he must have "land and niggers and a fine house," that he must found a family and leave behind a son of his name. The Civil War ruins him as a landowner, and miscegenation wrecks his hopes for family; but his error, his "initial mistake" for which he patiently searches (and unsuccessfully, "he not calling it retribution, no sins of the father come home to roost") is obviously his unprincipled surrender to and fanatical par-

ticipation in the unrighteous caste system at which he had at first taken affront.

Thus Quentin's grandfather sees him trying to hold "his code of logic and morality . . . whose balanced sum and product declined, refused to swim or even float." Faulkner seems to imply that for all its rationalization into a code, the South's system, as imitated by Sutpen, was untenable and productive of aberration because in victimizing the Negro the South lost its integrity. Hightower's father had been "an abolitionist almost before the sentiment had become a word to percolate down from the North," and his disapproval of slavery, Hightower realizes, lay in a throwback to the "austerity" of pioneer times when a man had to do for himself "by means of a sheer fortitude." Here again, as in Faulkner's frequent idealizations of honesty, is an index to a fixed value and the resurgent virtue it elicits.

Picturing the post-bellum fate of the South and Southerners, Faulkner seems to adumbrate what Rosa Coldfield calls

> that justice which presides over human events which, incept in the individual, runs smooth, less claw than velvet: but which, by man or woman flouted, drives on like fiery steel and overrides both weakly just and unjust strong, both vanquisher and innocent victimized, ruthless for appointed right and truth.

It is a justice sometimes working for redress through man's destructive violence. In Sutpen's story of the West Indian slave riots, the smell of the burning sugar is as if intensified by the "secret dark years which had created the hatred and implacability." Faulkner does not attribute implacability, however, to the typical Negroes in his Mississippi scenes. He more often shows them resigned in that state of life to which it has pleased generations of white folks to call them. "It rests with the servant to lend dignity to an unnatural proceeding," he writes in *Mosquitoes,* and frequently he shows the black man making that contribution. The Negro's unnatural, paradoxical status is keenly felt by Faulkner, as in his description of overalls, "that harsh and shapeless denim cut to an iron pattern and sold by the millions—that burlesque uniform and regalia of the tragic burlesque of the sons of Ham." Quentin Compson realizes that "a nigger is not a person so much as a form of behavior; a sort of obverse reflection of the white people he lives among," and he credits that behavior as having a quality of "shabby and timeless patience, of static serenity: that blending of childlike and ready incompetence and paradoxical

reliability that tends and protects them it loves out of all reason and robs them steadily and evades responsibility and obligations by means too barefaced to be called subterfuge," yet showing "a fond and unflagging tolerance for whitefolks' vagaries like that of a grandparent for unpredictable and troublesome children." Caspey, the family factotum in *Sartoris,* is a full-length picture and something of a caricature of such a Negro. A more profoundly conceived and more symbolic Negro character, perhaps the finest in all of Faulkner, is in *The Sound and the Fury,* the servant Dilsey, who is crucified by work and worry, who speaks with open bitterness to her employers and her own family, but whose fidelity, beneficence, and endurance are unending. There is an unforgettable glimpse of her in the Negro church, when "two tears slid down her fallen cheeks, in and out of the myriad coruscations of immolation and abnegation and time."

Significantly, Faulkner's most implacable characters are not pure Negroes, but those in whom is a mixture of black and white bloods. These characters—most notably Joe Christmas in *Light in August,* Charles Bon and his son in *Absalom, Absalom!*—seem to bear forever in their hearts the sharp dilemma of an ancient inexpiable wrong. All Joe Christmas craved was peace, an escape from fury and despair, but peace was the one thing denied him, by the compulsions of his own mixed temperament and by social pressures upon the half-caste. Both he and Charles Etienne St. Valery Bon are shown in raging acts of provocation and violence against Negroes, at moments when their bitterness grows unbearably strong. Faulkner himself views Joe Christmas' dilemma with pitying detachment as "that stain either on his white blood or his black blood, whichever you will." Miss Burden, in *Light in August,* says more bluntly that the Negroes are "a race doomed and cursed to be forever and ever a part of the white race's doom and curse for its sins." The intolerable burden of forefathers' offence is indicated in the cynical resignation of Charles Bon, the wealthy, cultivated New Orleans gentleman with the imperceptible taint of Negro blood, who by forcing his half brother Henry Sutpen to shoot him really commits suicide, no other course of action being left to him but a fatal affront to the social order that has damned him for the wrong it has done him.

This implacability of the half-caste, driving on to self-destruction, is complemented by the implacability of those Southern whites who ration-

alize the irritations of an unsound social order into a cult of race prejudice and terrorism. Faulkner is painfully conscious of this streak of sadism in his people, and has rendered his revulsion to it most powerfully in that great and almost unbearable short story, "Dry September," as well as in scenes throughout the novels. When Miss Burden is found murdered, Faulkner shows the gathering mob of those

> who believed aloud that it was by an anonymous negro crime committed not by a negro but by Negro . . . and some of them with pistols already in their pockets began to canvass about for someone to crucify.

Such race prejudice diffuses into ruthlessness both within and outside the law. In *The Wild Palms* Faulkner shows a man

> with the indelible mark of ten thousand Southern deputy sheriffs, urban and suburban—the snapped hatbrim, the sadist's eyes, the slightly and unmistakably bulged coat, the air not swaggering exactly but of a formally pre-absolved brutality.

The frenzied Jason Compson, in *The Sound and the Fury,* imagines himself stealing a country church-goer's team, and himself striking the man down:

> "I'm Jason Compson. See if you can stop me. See if you can elect a man to office that can stop me," he said, thinking of himself entering the courthouse with a file of soldiers and dragging the sheriff out.

Then each little country church seems

> a picket-post where the rear guards of Circumstance peeped fleetingly back at him. "And damn You, too," he said, "See if You can stop me," thinking of himself, his file of soldiers with the manacled sheriff in the rear, dragging Omnipotence down from His throne, if necessary.

That violent spirit in the South is seen in various degrees and contemplated in various moods by Faulkner's more philosophic characters. Doc Peabody feels it simply as an influence of climate and country—weather, land, and rivers are "opaque, slow, violent; shaping and creating the life of man in its implacable and brooding image." Benbow (declaring that either he needs a change, or Mississippi, one) accuses Southern society, what he ironically calls the "free Democratico-Protestant atmosphere." Hightower, as the most detached and speculative of Faulkner's characters, feels even in sectarian church music "the apotheosis of his own history, his own land, his own environed blood: that people . . . who can never take either pleasure or catastrophe or escape from either, without

brawling over it"; "their escape from it is in violence," their very religion driving them "to crucifixion of themselves and one another." Thus even the perpetrators of the fatal mobbing and mutilation of Joe Christmas see in him at last their own inescapable and unforgettable fate, as he

> lay there, with his eyes open and empty of everything save consciousness, and with something, a shadow, about his mouth. For a long moment he looked up at them with peaceful and unfathomable and unbearable eyes. Then his face, body, all, seemed to collapse, to fall in upon itself, and from out the slashed garments about his hips and loins the pent black blood seemed to rush like a released breath. It seemed to rush out of his pale body like a rush of sparks from a rising rocket; upon that black blast the man seemed to rise soaring into their memories forever and ever. They are not to lose it, in whatever peaceful valleys, beside whatever placid and reassuring streams of old age, in the mirroring faces of whatever children they will contemplate old disasters and newer hopes. It will be there, musing, quiet, steadfast, not fading and not particularly threatful, but of itself alone serene, of itself alone triumphant.

Whether inherent in blood or environment, this doom of the South abides. After the Civil War Bayard Sartoris, in *The Unvanquished,* tried to repudiate the code of so-called honor and violence, but that violence reasserts itself disastrously in his grandson Bayard, in *Sartoris,* and leads to the violent death of both men. Young Bayard, the returned war pilot, is an end product of the Southern legend of privilege, expressing in a traditional physical arrogance his wild and inconsolable nature. At the close of *Sartoris* Faulkner makes the name of that tribe of Southern gentlemen representative of "glamorous fatality," and suggests that perhaps Sartoris is not just the Player's name for his pawns, but "the game itself—a game outmoded and played with pawns shaped too late and to an old dead pattern, and of which the Player Himself is a little wearied."

A correct estimate of Faulkner's penetration into these aspects of the South will not mistake his view for mere nostalgia and ancestor-worship. His scarcely seems to be the old-Southern-mansion, old-massa type of pseudo-humanism with which the Mississippian George O'Donnell recently attempted to saddle him in an article, "Faulkner's Mythology." Faulkner is never seen "looking with stubborn recalcitrance backward beyond the fever and into the disease with actual regret," like the ghosts in Quentin Compson's mind. Indeed, the whole of Faulkner's work, far from idealizing the old South and its lingering legend, seems to suggest the thesis that the sin of human slavery was so great as to require for its

expiation nothing less than a wiping the slate clean, by a complete reversal to primitivism among a people who, whatever their pretensions to a culture, were never really just and sound enough to bequeath a working tradition. What they did bequeath, besides degeneration or disillusion, was ruthlessness (resurgent in the Snopes tribe, typical practitioners of amoral exploitation) with the hypocritical mask of aristocracy finally fallen away. The ultimate expression of this pessimistic view of the South's doom Faulkner puts into the mouth of Shreve, the totally detached, sarcastic observer, who thinks that "in time the Jim Bonds [the one nigger Sutpen left] are going to conquer the western hemisphere."

Perhaps nowhere has Faulkner written more feelingly of the South, with a more filial sympathy for it, yet with so much of a Hamlet's grieving disillusionment, as in *The Unvanquished;* and young Bayard Sartoris in narrating this story seems to speak most directly for his author. An early passage in the book epitomizes the Old South's excruciating insoluble dilemmas precipitated by the Civil War, when the slave Loosh shows the raiding Yankees the buried Sartoris silver, follows them, and is disconsolately followed by his wife Philadelphy. He says:

> "I going. I done been freed; God's own angel proclamated me free and gonter general me to Jordan. I don't belong to John Sartoris now; I belongs to me and God."
>
> "But the silver belongs to John Sartoris," Granny said, "Who are you to give it away?"
>
> "You ax me that?" Loosh said. "Where John Sartoris? Whyn't he come and ax me that? Let God ax John Sartoris who the man name that give me to him. Let the man that buried me in the black dark ax that of the man what dug me free."

And just as there is no rebuttal to this, so there is no hopeful answer for Granny's question to Philadelphy—"Don't you know he's leading you into misery and starvation?"

In the book's last section, "An Odor of Verbena," comes what seems to be Faulkner's own cutting of the Gordian knot, as Bayard withdraws to aloofness from the South's cult still perpetuated by men like his father who "have killed too much," and by the abetting women like his sweetheart Drusilla, "priestess of a succinct and formal violence." Nine years after the war, when Bayard, then twenty-three, is studying law, his father is shot by his badgered political and financial rival, Redmond. As he rides home, the only surviving Sartoris male, Bayard knows Drusilla and his

servant Ringo and all the family's friends will expect him to take conventional vengeance; yet he realizes he has become different from them, "despite my raising and background (or maybe because of them)." Consequently he rejects the loaded pistols Drusilla offers him, and unarmed confronts Redmond, who fires twice without aiming and leaves Jefferson at once, forever. A friend and fellow-soldier of Colonel Sartoris tells Bayard, "Maybe you're right, maybe there has been enough killing in your family"; but Bayard returns home to find that Drusilla has gone, Drusilla to whom "the dream" is worth more than human life, who had summarized the fatal ideal of the unvanquished when she told him:

> "There are worse things than killing men, Bayard. There are worse things than being killed. Sometimes I think the finest thing that can happen to a man is to love something, a woman preferably, well, hard hard hard, then to die young because he believed what he could not help but believe and was what he could not (could not? would not) help but be."

It seems probable that William Faulkner, not only refusing to try to revenge the South but even refusing to condone its sins, feels himself like Bayard equally bereaved and alone. Such a personal feeling about himself as a Southerner added to the fundamentally melancholy bent of Faulkner's temperament could account in no small degree for the dark tinge of his stories.

Faulkner, however, while consistently a Southerner of his own kind and a novelist of the South, is no mere sociological regionalist. He is a literary genius who has painted what he has seen in the light of a temperament sensitive, comprehensive, and profound. From his contemplation of a region vexed with problems of peculiar complexity and difficulty he has developed a view of human life that is psychologically representative, and in books which depend least on the Southern locale, such as *The Wild Palms* and *Pylon,* he has generalized the theme that man, when passion-ridden and irrationally seeking privilege or sensation or escape, plunges on toward stultification and tragedy. Fundamentally Faulkner is as right as Swift, and he seems equally to cherish the ideal of man as a creature capable of rationality or he would not be so inconsolably affronted by the evils he contemplates, nor would he so diligently search out their historical and psychological roots, nor would he create his humane protagonists like Benbow and Hightower, Quentin Compson and the reporter in *Pylon,* Ratliff in *The Hamlet* and young Bayard Sartoris in *The*

Unvanquished, in systematic protest against those evils, as well as in expression of his personal disenchantment.

Faulkner's pessimism is perhaps morbid, but it is impossible to reject the essential veracity of the tragic graph he traces through from Colonel John Sartoris to Sutpen to the post-bellum Sartorises and Compsons and finally to the Snopses and to that howling primitive Jim Bond. Perhaps Faulkner's melancholy is excessive, and certainly it is within the function of philosophical criticism to chide any such excess. Before that is attempted in Faulkner's case, however, a preliminary issue in criticism of him should be faced. Is he merely riding on the momentum of a waning, vitiated romance that lends his narratives a scandalous interest, or do the evils pictured conform fundamentally to observable and characteristic acts of men, and do these evils pictured stand proportionately silhouetted against an implied background of enduring ideals? If Faulkner were only the sensationalist he is so often accused of being, then he would be a most vicious pander, procurer of his own kin. However, an unprejudiced and careful reading of his entire work may be expected to reveal his deep knowledge of his subject, his rationality and detachment, his moral awareness and his uncompromising opposition to evil. A reader whose sensitivity and courage approach Faulkner's own can scarcely find anything melodramatic or titillating in such books as *Light in August* or *Absalom, Absalom!* but will rather experience that catharsis of pity and terror which comes only of great literature, and which can be conveyed only by a temperament of genius, proceeding from a humane point of view, and employing a comprehensive grasp of a significant section of life.

THE PROFESSOR AS RADICAL

By PAUL BIXLER

THIS IS AN ESSAY *in persuasion, and since it is addressed chiefly to academic minds, presumably it should be subtle and disarming. Yet I find such an approach full of difficulties and uncertainties. Gentle raillery or satire, for example, is a method very congenial to the professor. From considerable practice he knows its uses, and in his own mind he is never in better form than when he is using it against himself. Here is where the difficulty comes in, for satire merely confirms him in his own prejudices and in his own splendid isolation.*[1] *It is likewise with reason, another possible weapon. Reason is the professor's stock in trade. It is what he lives by, and if he were deprived of its intricacies he would die. Yet here again whenever the possibilities let him, he uses it upon his own interests. And when reason is applied for that purpose the result becomes the plainest rationalization—a weapon, it is true, but one turned to the defense of the status quo. Scholarship, or more pertinently, the frame of scholarship, is still another possibility. But does the professor trust the footnotes of anyone with whose field of knowledge he is not already somewhat familiar? I think not. By and large they do not exist for him as much beyond a means for his own protective coloration.*

I shall endeavor to appeal, then, not to the professor but to the man. If in this brief history and the conclusions to be drawn from it there are found traces of satire, reason, and the trappings of scholarship, they should be set down as the difficulties of one who cannot wholly purge himself of the scholastic tradition. The more important elements, I trust, will be the open argument and the occasional cold shock of unspoiled truth—the ice cube dropped down the back of the neck.

THE HISTORY of education is a road of many turns, not all of which are outlined on our current maps. Let us begin this critique of the college teacher with something which few college teachers have thought of since the time it happened. Let us begin in 1873 with Whitelaw Reid speaking at Dartmouth College on the subject, "The Scholar in Politics." Reid is no bearded prophet; he is a young Republican journalist. He remembers affectionately his own highly successful undergraduate days at Miami University, and he is not unaware of what a college audience may expect of him in the way of oratorical periods. Politics, he says presently, is no worse than the law which protects rogues, and business which de-

[1]See as a prime example Marten ten Hoor, "The Species Professor Americanus and Some Natural Enemies," *Association of American Colleges Bulletin* XXVI (1940), 404-15.

ceives the buyer; it is in fact, the "highest work that awaits scholarship in a democratic land." Politics may be coarse, vulgar, demoralizing, degrading, but the American scholar who stands outside the arena, "daintily sniffing at the odors of the struggle and wondering how he can get beyond their reach," is like the man who complained of his termagant wife that there was no living with her or without her. . . .

It is important, here, to recall Reid's background. Back in Ohio in 1860 he has boldly thrown the support of his lively little newspaper, the Xenia *News,* to Abraham Lincoln when the rest of the state is committed to the fortunes of Salmon Chase. He has reported the Civil War from the field; he has visited the South just before Reconstruction and written a brilliant report of it. He has entered the editorial offices of the powerful New York *Tribune,* and now (within the year) at the tender age of 35, he has assumed the mantle of Horace Greeley. We must see him flexible and realistic, standing on his own special prominence, searching the future and asking questions. He begins to develop the political problems of the day—political graft, control of corporations (organizations to which "you largely owe the ruin of legislative virtue, and the dangerous tempting of judicial honor"), labor relations, the extent of suffrage and imperialism, "compulsory" education. . . .

What, he poses rhetorically, are the legitimate functions of scholars in relation to these problems? His answer, if given great publicity at any time within the last forty years, would have shaken college administrators and blackballed the speaker from Maine to California. "It is a notable tendency of the men of the highest and finest culture everywhere," says Reid, "to antagonize existing institutions." While the scholars of a land do their duty, he continues, no finished political system will be created. "Wise unrest

> will always be their chief trait. We may set it down as, within certain needful and obvious limitations, the very foremost function of the scholar in politics, *To oppose the established.* (Reid's italics)

Yet this is a negative attack, and it might by a twist be used against the liberal almost as well as against the conservative. There is a second, a positive function:

> Always we shall have, under some new name, and with new watchwords, the old Conservative party, dreading change, gathering to itself the respectability of experience and standing and success. . . . Always, again, we shall have the

> party of revolt from these philosophers of yesterdays,—the party that disputes the established, that demands change . . . the party that gathers to itself all the restless, all the extravagant, all the crack-brained, all the men with hobbies and missions and spheres. . . . Need I say where it seems to me the American scholar belongs? He has too rarely been found there as yet. . . . Free thought is necessarily aggressive and critical. The scholar, like the healthy, red-blooded young man, is an inherent, an organic, an inevitable radical. . . . And so we may set down, as a second function of the American scholar in politics, *An intellectual leadership of the radicals.* (Again Reid's italics)

Between 1873, the year which marked the beginning of the longest depression of the nineteenth century, and the 1930's, it is doubtful that college teachers and students anywhere heard a similar exposition of their social and political responsibilities. Reid repeated his speech at Amherst and at Miami, and it was published in a popular magazine.[2] But it seemed to drop into a void, and years afterward when those of his speeches and writings that were reputed best were gathered into two volumes, "The Scholar in Politics" was omitted.[3]

II

It is possible that Reid's appeal for an "intellectual leadership of the radicals" was chiefly a reflection of his own experience. Certainly it was mistakenly timed, for the wind of fundamental change which had come up during the Civil War had almost blown itself out by 1873, and already at work were forces of a far different order. Any treatment of the professor as radical in the period 1873-1930 must turn almost immediately into an examination of the conditions surrounding radicalism.

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[2]"The Scholar in Politics," *Scribner's Monthly,* VI (1873), 605-16.

[3]Instead, there was included an address delivered at the turn of the century at Stanford University ("University Tendencies in America," in *American and English Studies,* 2 vols., 1913) in which Reid briefly recanted his earlier pronouncement. In 1901 he objected to "freedom for a professor which absolves him from the duties of a patriot," and he thought it "a misfortune for the colleges, and no less for the country, when the trusted instructors were out of sympathy with its history, with its development, and with the men who made the one and are guiding the other." Reid was an uncommonly good weathervane for his time. In the interval between speeches America had given hostages to an enormous industrial development—a process which was to continue after 1900 with further variations on the capitalistic theme in the realms of finance.

One of the first social casualties of the time was the word itself. Industrial battles in the last quarter of the nineteenth century were violently ideological as well as economic and physical. Radicalism, as imported out of Karl Marx and Ferdinand LaSalle by class-conscious German workers in the late 1860's and early '70's, showed its hand in the formation of the Workingman's Party of 1877 and in the great railroad strikes of the same year. Anarchism out of Michael Bakunin did its part in the eight-hour agitation of the early '80's and in the general strike of 1886. When in the climactic Haymarket Square riot, six of the seven arrested anarchists were discovered to be foreign-born, defenders of wealth and public order were enabled to equate "radicalism" with "anarchism" and to label both in a very real sense as un-American. Thus the public, disturbed by the tumult and only partly understanding its source, consigned a term which had been in good standing since the founding of the Republic to a place outside the pale of reputable society. Except perhaps for "agitator" and later the "bolshevik" and "red" of the 1920's and '30's, "radical" had no close rival for inclusive opprobrium. It was a label to be accepted as bitterly as the "atheist" of a previous generation—something not to be openly displayed unless one's coat had long been threadbare.

About this development there were few responsibles who greatly cared, for all America was on the make and there was no staying the fact with "destructive" criticism. Out of the enterprise and aggressiveness that were applied to the railroads, to steel, and to oil there flowed a broad stream of gold. In some industries and in the stock market, fortunes sometimes multiplied overnight, and money was often made after the manner of a later generation—a flood of coins clattering down as the lucky gambler hit the jack pot. American colleges, of which a substantial number were already functioning in 1880, would have cashed in on the new prosperity in any case, for original penury and the inclusive nature of the new competitive society put them under dire necessity.

But their winnings were extraordinary. Between 1880 and 1930 the value of their annual gifts multiplied ten times, and of all the money given for philanthropic purposes in that period they received almost half. It was not merely that practical genius enjoyed the decorations of culture. Colleges and universities were organizations already functioning, their methods of control were not too foreign to those of business, and donors felt confidence in the disposition of their gifts.

In the structural hierarchy which has from the first formed the government in American institutions of higher learning the chief item has always been absentee ownership. A nonresident board employed a deputy, the president, who in turn employed the faculty, who in turn employed what was left of academic prestige on the students.

A new prosperity and the appearance of men of practical affairs on campus often aggravated the original situation. Clergymen on the governing board gave way one by one to business men and lawyers, and the organizational pattern came to resemble that which the men of money knew best, their fiscal policy seriously affecting many matters with which they were unfamiliar and uncongenial. Under such a dispensation the lightning of controversy continually flashed about the head of the new president, who as often as not was himself a product of the latest business methods and who had accepted a job superhuman in its extent and in its responsibility. At his best this deputy of the trustees usually became a semi-benevolent despot, liberalizing educational policy to fit the pressure of the time, holding his board's attention chiefly to extension of plant, and letting his faculty go its own way except when somebody insisted on sticking his neck out. At his worst he became the bull of the campus, manipulating educational policy for personal ends, hiring and firing at will, and creating or contributing to one internal crisis after another.[4]

In this educational scene the professor played a relatively minor role. Inside college walls as well as outside he was regarded as ornamental, "weak," "unmanly," "harmless . . . and not fond of imagining himself unapproved of by those higher than himself in power and influence." No strong occupational tradition upheld him, for in the current educational

[4]Literature of the time shows almost no glimmering of comprehension concerning the evils of an authoritarian educational structure, possibly because it was chiefly written by administrators; there was only one Veblen (*The Higher Learning in America*), and he was anathema. So late as 1931 J. E. Kirkpatrick's ideas on the subject in his excellent *Academic Organization and Control* (Yellow Springs, O., Antioch Press, 1931) differed markedly from those held by prominent members of college and university staffs. But the files of the *Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors* are full of evidence, and much of the periodical literature of the first two decades of the twentieth century indirectly proves the point. In the storm of confused criticism which hit the colleges in the 1920's, much could have been obviated or correctly channelized had the critics examined college and university charters.

expansion in which his numbers multiplied ten times, most often he was only a naturalized scholar. By process of elimination the new business civilization was usually alien to his spirit, yet he had no weapons to defend himself. His salary was originally low and did not increase proportionately with the new prosperity; in real wages he averaged little if any more in 1927 than he had in 1895. Often he found himself spiritually as far from the latest human by-product of the new world, his students, as he was from the makers and organizers of that world. He was not a man in his own home. How, then, could he be expected to call his soul his own off the reservation?

Of his slender resources perhaps the greatest in its potentiality was the scientific spirit. In the '80's and '90's as he threw off the shackles of the older theological and metaphysical heritage, he pronounced for objectivity and the free mind. Since the greatest battle was fought over Darwinism, the scientists became smug in their priority of ownership. But the professor in every field drank from the life-giving doctrine of free inquiry and in his isolation cherished it as one of the chief reasons for his existence.

In practice its marginal meanings sometimes caused him uneasiness. C. C. Bowman, in a study of 500 articles published in the general magazines between 1890 and 1938, discovered that the one repeated criticism of the college professor which struck more deliberately at academic mores than any other involved the emphasis on specialized research.[5] Since the professor usually made the criticism himself, its seriousness could not be controverted. Was not specialized research often a symbol of the very ineffectiveness of his position? Freedom for inquiry was perhaps his primary good fortune; so he was emphatically told (nearly always with a caveat against taking sides) by governing boards, college presidents, and his faculty colleagues; yet in its practical use he was frequently dissatisfied. Too often the results turned out to be esoteric or piddling.

It was not surprising that when the World War arrived, the professor leaped at the opportunity to show what he could do in real life. So active did he become that his part seemed almost like expiation for previous inactivity. Indeed, the *New Republic* noted at the time that "if the several important professional and social groups could have voted separately on the question of war and peace, the list of college professors would probably

[5] *The College Professor in America* (Philadelphia, Author, 1938), pp. 140-1.

have yielded the highest majority in favor of war, except perhaps that contained in the Social Register." He wrote pamphlets for the Creel Committee, did research in war materials and in morale, entered the army, even brought the army to the campus. Generally he rejoiced in the chance to escape from his submerged and ineffective position and in the opportunity to gain confidence in a practical world.

The war objectified for him the weakness of his place in yet another way. Under the pressure of patriotism his freedom suddenly assumed new values. Such a possession—if it may be called that—had not always seemed so important. In fact the term "academic freedom" in the sense of liberty for the professor to think and discuss as he sees best had not appeared until after the turn of the century; before that it had referred to liberty of the student to choose in the curriculum. Largely out of the first professorial discussions there came in 1915 the organization of the American Association of University Professors, a group which in a gentle, objective way was to make everyone concerned more conscious of the grosser examples of internal academic mayhem. Discussion of the security of the faculty member in all its ramifications began to grow in frequency and in detail. And presently reference was to be made to the "hired man" concept.[6] The professor was becoming conscious of his place not only in education but in society, and here and there he was talking of change.

Yet he was no radical. Why? The chief cause would seem to be illustrated and implied in the brief sketch just given. But to be explicit one must refer to the meaning of "radical" (which in these days when it is still so often prefixed with "wild-eyed," had better be taken from the dictionary): "Of, pertaining to, or proceeding from, the root. . . . Original; fundamental; reaching to the center or ultimate source; affecting the vital principle or principles." In the period 1873-1930 the professor was no radical chiefly for the following reason: He was rising to potential strength in a society which believed it had no need for fundamental thought on fundamental issues.

III

What of the 1930's?

[6]Future historians, of course, will look in vain for reference to collective bargaining. Only an academic satirist in reverse could have developed the implications in that concept and written the articles of a proper agreement.

Outwardly it was a decade of confusion and contradiction; inwardly it was one of transition. Some increase in enrolment of students and in number of faculty members continued, though the rate of rise was noticeably falling. Income from every source dropped everywhere, and expenses and salaries had to be cut. Necessary adjustments called for re-evalution of programs, greater emphasis on essentials, and more efficient spending. There was hardship but not so much as could be found elsewhere on the American scene. One of the developments which indicated a certain health in higher education was the greater attention given everywhere to the social sciences. In 1930 Abraham Flexner wrote in *Universities: American, English, German*:

> It is . . . creative activity, productive and critical inquiry—all in a sense without practical responsibility—that must bulk ever larger and larger in the modern university. . . . Let us consider for a moment the social and political situation within which we live, and I take this realm first, because it is the realm in which universities are doing least, the realm which is most difficult and dangerous to approach, the realm which is for these reasons perhaps the most important to master. Democracy has dragged in its wake social, economic, educational, and political problems infinitely more perplexing than the relatively simple problems which its credulous crusaders undertook to solve. Society cannot retreat; . . . we shall in the end probably fare better, if the adaptations and inventions requisite to making a success of democracy are facilitated. . . .

These inventions and adaptations, believed Flexner, must be made by statesmen under advice of university thinkers. Moreover, the investigations sheltered by university walls must not be content with the compiling of data; they must also generalize. For

> in the social sciences as elsewhere generalization is at once a test of and a stimulus to minute and realistic research. The generalizations will not endure; why should they? They have not endured in mathematics, physics, and chemistry. But, then, neither have the data.

This was opinion not to be ignored, and in the following years it was theory to be put into practice, haltingly in certain places, but with increasing general agreement. Flexner put his emphatic reliance on what had become by this time the bedrock of higher education, scientific research; his attention was fixed on the university. But it did not seem illogical to consider that the undergraduate college had its special corollary in the investigative process; that the job of the college was the fostering of the

intellectual climate necessary to the employment of democratic inventions and adaptations.

Flexner's projection of statesmen taking advice from university thinkers became a graphic reality sooner than expected. One of the high points of the time was the participation of the professors in the New Deal—a situation overlaid with many variables. Clearly, the professors enjoyed this second total immersion in public life. Never before had they received so much popular attention; under strain of a crisis the public was persuaded to look upon their efforts with an open mind, and within the government they were treated not only as experts on details but as makers of policy. The hiatus, of course, was not something which could last. With the vanishing fear of collapse which followed within eighteen months, the old-fashioned distrust of brains was resuscitated. For years the popular mind had considered ideas as ornamental, and as the old guard of the 1920's and their camp followers returned to the wars, no longer afraid, they sought to retire the professor to his familiar doghouse.

They were not wholly successful. Some professors continued to tread the public boards in spite of reactionary catcalls. Others continued their lesser public ministrations backstage, as indeed they had performed them in the days before the New Deal. Still others, on campus, remembered the new truth, first realized to the full in the dark days of 1932-33, that the professor, whatever his field of learning, cannot turn his back on the political drama of the day; that in modern society he cannot avoid a social crisis—that if he tries, the social crisis will "participate in him, right in the neck." It was a residue not to be destroyed by propaganda.

The atmosphere of the time was more and more saturated with talk of democracy. Not much effort was expended in careful definition, not much beyond a supposition that change should occur gradually or "democratically." Strange word, "democracy," to come from authoritarian organizations like colleges and universities! So late as 1939 a committee of the American Association of University Professors in a report from 180 campuses was discovering that in the modal institution of higher learning: a) there was no definite plan for exchange of opinion between faculty and board of control; b) the faculty was consulted in appointments, promotions, and dismissals only through the head of the department concerned; c) the faculty was not consulted in the choice of a new president; d) deans were appointed by the president and his board without consulta-

tion with the faculty; e) faculty was consulted on the making of budgets only through the heads of departments; f) heads of departments were appointed by the administration. Just what composed the typical organizational relationships on another level, that between faculty and students, no one could say. But it did not seem likely that it differed radically from that reported several years before: in only two out of 281 colleges and universities did the responsibility for "discipline of students" (in itself a phrase to be pondered) rest in a student council or senate, and in only two more in a joint student-faculty council; in all the rest responsibility remained solely with the faculty or administration, and even here most often with the latter.

Yet there was a loosening within the organizational strait jacket. Particularly was this true between teachers and taught. If students were still overpersuaded on the college obsession for semiprofessional forms of athletics, they generally perceived also that they should demand and receive something of value in the classroom. And if the professor, learning chiefly from his own authoritarian experience, was often loath to foster democratic undergraduate participation in college government, nevertheless his own growth in a paternalistic attitude and his new techniques in advising and counseling proved a noteworthy advance over previous methods of educational *laissez faire* and *caveat emptor*. Mutual respect and rapport between the two groups were marks of the decade.

There were other evidences of growth. Membership in the American Association of University Professors doubled, becoming almost a respectable minority within the total national professorship. Although an increase in reported violations of academic freedom probably indicated greater institutional stress, certainly it also meant heightened awareness among faculties of their social improvidence. More astonishing was the growth of professorial membership in the American Federation of Teachers—from next to nothing to 2500; here there was a definite reaching out not only for participation in the total cause of learning but also for alignment with social forces whose purpose seemed democratic and good.

Essentially the professor is a thinker and writer, and the spirit of the time was punctuated by the heightened flood of written discourse. There were articles and books and letters to the editor. And late in 1934 the inauguration of the *Social Frontier* (later *Frontiers of Democracy*), a journal which accepted "democracy both as end and means . . . . as *end* . . .

the highest possible regard for human personality . . . . and . . . as *means* . . . reliance upon free discussion. . . ." Once again the professor here and there aligned himself with the breadth and length of education and of social interest.

He was becoming used to interruptions from offstage. And when the Popular Front appeared in 1935, he paused for reconnaissance. For the moment it seemed that much might be well in the amalgamation of Communists, Socialists, and Men of Good Will. And out along the furthermost escarpment of the American educational world, while some watched sympathetically, a teacher now and then, repudiating the baptism of his fathers but not the emotion, leaped out into the dark waters of the new religion. . . .

Upon an unresolved scene dropped the bombs of the Second World War. For so long had we waited in dread of the explosion, it seemed at first as though we had all been here before; this, it seemed, was where, in 1916, we had come in. Yet it was not so. This was war and so was the armed conflict of 1914; this was a struggle of France plus Britain against Germany and so was that. But it was no more the same than history is the same; no more the same than the weapons and the strategy. As the professor who had been searching for answers took a good look around the world, he began to understand some of the differences. And presently he returned his gaze to the home front (another proof of difference) to measure and use what he had learned.

IV

It is no easy task for the professor to assume the "intellectual leadership of the radicals"[7] even now. For it means taking thought beyond the textbook and most of the collateral reading. Against it are many of his habits and his prejudices, his wishful thinking and his fear that what

[7]Further Definition: The radical, finding want in the midst of plenty and rugged individualism within a society made safe by science only for democratic collectivism, makes up his mind to do what he can to resolve the dichotomy. Instead of "So what!" he is likely to comment, "For what?" ("Knowledge for what?" "Production for whom?") He is not only thorough-going; he is vigorous, positive, and imaginative within the realms of the possible. His radicalism has a world view but does not genuflect before foreign governments. It is honest, has the courage of its convictions, and stands firmly on its own American feet. Above all, it is moral.

little he has of security will be taken away. The task is so much trouble that it would not be advocated here were it not necessary.

The threat to the professor's way of life cuts deep, within the college as much as without. No one would argue that any society has perpetuated itself in fixed form or that an education which prepares for the *status quo* can live long. Yet the danger of such an effort is here. As the college has become economically troubled, the emphasis among those responsible for its continuance, particularly in the privately endowed institutions, has fallen upon freedom from "political domination"—a fear most recently exemplified in the refusal of many colleges to ask for or allow the benefits of the Social Security laws for their service employees. Such mournful gazing at one's own navel shows no conception of the college's original enslavement, and if it means in the end only that the college has joined its forces to those of reaction and historical privilege, it would be better if all endowments were destroyed and the administrative officers became Washington lobbyists.

For some time it has been higher education's democratic boast that money was no requisite for an A.B. degree. Today the boast is endangered, and lingering in the background awaiting only the chance to reinforce a new class-consciousness is the age-old snobbishness of the learned. No longer can the college and university consider their democracy to be part of *laissez faire*. Democracy is first a growth, and they cannot continue to partake of it unless by conscious effort they reach out for intelligence regardless of source, unless they fall in with the total cause of education, and unless they liberalize and make flexible the relationships on their own grounds.

The problem on campus is especially theirs. Although a definition of democracy as opportunity for the many to attend college would automatically list the American system of higher education as the most democratic the world has ever known, a definition confined to college method and organization would put it at the opposite end of the ideological scale. Not in England, not in South America, not in pre-Nazi Germany has the structure of university government control been so authoritarian as here. And now as college growth tapers off and the vitality of increase disappears, there is less than formerly an organic check to freezing in a permanent mold the methods of an old-fashioned ownership. There is today powerful need for the faculty to assume the primary responsibility of the

campus, for students to have a part in campus government, and for alumni to look upon their alma mater with the eyes of adults. To this problem of democracy the radical can apply himself whole-heartedly, for the old system cannot be changed except radically, and nothing but democracy in the long run can give the college such flexibility or strength.

If there were wide confidence in the process of higher education, it would have great chance of survival. But not only is it doubtful that the colleges have won the confidence of the American public; under the strictures of a war-time peace and a declining economy, their enemies are leaping to the attack. Within, there are the Mortimer Adlers, who think the current system of scientific inquiry should be destroyed except for that small segment which may safely be kept alive within the iron lung of an authoritarian theology. There are others of little imagination and no social conscience—those who believe, for example, that higher education is spelling out race suicide because it does not educate for "God, motherhood, and honest toil."[8] And without the colleges, there are those who, behind the new drive for vocational training, look toward the destruction of the intellectual and toward the time when all young people can be put in their predetermined places.

At the crucial point of the issue of survival is the professor. If he is not willing to make up his mind and speak his opinion clearly so that those who may listen can follow his leadership, he simply lends the aspect of truth to the idea, only too readily accepted off campus, that the universities are useless social baggage. Within the next few years there is likely to be small place for a hothouse culture which flourishes in the soil of unearned increment. No learning which cannot justify itself by public works and public faith can exist long in a civilization under stress.

Some of the fruits of scientific inquiry, which was once the showgarden of the university, seem strange in times like the present. Under the doctrines of the suspended judgment ("the facts are not all in") and objectivity ("let the facts speak for themselves") it is only too easy for the professor to be irresponsible about social change—a flight to neutrality which can cost him dear. Fact-finding is only a part of the educational process, and he who does not draw conclusions is shirking his job. In so far as the professor is a mental eunuch, paying no attention to values or to

[8]John E. Brown, "Common Sense or Chaos," *Vital Speeches of the Day,* VI (1939), 130-3.

what happens to the knowledge he has discovered, he deserves the oblivion he is already receiving in other parts of the world and which he will receive here once the men of action draw their own conclusions. Nor is it going to be enough vaguely to defend objective inquiry or the scientific spirit. The professor must take the offensive and prove his usefulness.

"All new developments in the history of knowledge," cautiously declares a sociologist, "have been due to those scientists who did more in their social roles than their circles wanted and expected them to do."[9] To go on from there is not difficult. The professor must take his stand in politics and in society. He must push forward with the common man, identifying himself with those groups which are expansive, democratic and alive. He must contribute ideas for a new society.

The Second World War lends the movement urgency and pertinence.[10] We have been told that "the revolution is on." We miss the point if we do not see that the struggle is quite as urgently internal as external. As for America's part we may not see far, but we cannot desist from pushing the advance on that account. The time will never be better. No one can doubt now that changes are coming in our society. For the good of his own soul the professor cannot keep his hands off nor for conscience' sake can he do other than choose the better part.

There are times when for a man of knowledge to be radical is to be quixotic, and there are other times when it is tragic or only glorious. But today in America for the professor to put his knowledge of history and of social change to vital use is nothing short of necessity. For since Whitelaw Reid spoke his forgotten words we have come not yet full circle; the moment for effectiveness is just ahead, and it is not too much to say that today's radicalism may spell tomorrow's survival. Let those who grow fainthearted remember that the Tories did not win the Revolution and the Radical Republicans did not lose the Civil War.

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[9]Florian Znaniecki, *The Social Role of the Man of Knowledge* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1940), p. 164.

[10]It is worthy of note that America has had two revolutions in its history and that both were associated with major American wars. In the first the upheaval was so coincidental with the military struggle that the word "Revolution" has always been synonymous with the war itself, and in the second the economic overturn followed so closely upon the military that Charles Beard has for many Americans belatedly accomplished a similar feat of telescoping.

THE COUNTER-REFORMATION IN AMERICAN EDUCATION

By SIDNEY HOOK

DURING THE LAST FEW YEARS the progressive education movement in the United States has been under attack from various quarters. By a stroke of historical irony, the most serious attack comes from the University of Chicago, the original home of progressive education. It is contained in the writings and doctrines of President Robert M. Hutchins and Mr. Mortimer J. Adler, whom President Hutchins brought to the University as his educational and philosophical adviser. Their criticism is more fundamental than that of any other group because it is directed at the basic principles of progressive education and not at some particular practice or individual associated with the progressive movement. Indeed, they sometimes speak as if they are prepared to accept some of the methods of progressive education as embodied in the techniques of activity programs. At the same time they proclaim their unalterable opposition to the philosophy of progressive education, which to them is only one form of the modern philosophical heresy—naturalism.

In place of this philosophy, they would substitute a philosophy which calls for the reformation both of our schools and of American culture, of which the schools are a part. American education is to be desecularized; metaphysics and theology are to be enstated, as prescribed courses, in the curriculum of institutions of higher learning; the controlling values and objectives of the lower schools are to rest upon the truths of metaphysics and religion, which are "superior" to all other truths, particularly those reached by scientific method. American culture is to be reformed, at least to a point where this educational program can be implemented. In consequence, the state must abandon its neutrality towards religion.

These proposals have every right to be considered on their own merits. The re-examination of first principles is always in order when they are challenged. But before proceeding to a discussion of some of the assumptions upon which these proposals rest and the implications to which they lead, I want to say a word about the manner in which they are being

defended by Messrs. Hutchins and Adler. Unable to convince the generality of American educators by argument that their position is valid, they have seized the opportunity, provided by the fear and horror of American democracy at the triumphs of Hitlerism, to charge that Hitlerism is nothing but the philosophy of progressive education carried to its logical conclusions. Far from being able to defend the democratic way of life, progressive education, they contend, like all naturalisms, justifies the conclusion that "might makes right" and therewith justifies Hitler. Speaking of the dominant intellectual position of American democracy, alleged to have grown out of the same philosophical roots as progressive education, Mr. Hutchins says that it is "much closer to Hitler than we may care to admit. . . . Such principles as we have are not different enough from those of Hitler to make us very rugged in defending ours in preference to his."[1]

Constrained by the amenities of his presidential post, Mr. Hutchins does not draw the full conclusions from these and similar demagogic remarks. The conclusions are drawn by Mr. Adler, Mr. Hutchins' collaborator. Mr. Adler has recently maintained that American democracy "has more to fear from our professors [i.e., those who differ with him and Mr. Hutchins] than from Hitler." He goes even further and asserts that "until the professors and their culture are liquidated, the resolution of modern problems . . . will not even begin." He believes that Hitler is the instrument of Providence sent to destroy our culture and thus save us from the professors and their educational systems, which have corrupted Western civilization. His address has been widely reprinted in the Hearst and Catholic press of the country.

Mr. Adler makes no bones about the fact that he is more concerned with saving America from progressive education than from Hitlerism. But what, if anything, will save us from Hitlerism? Mr. Adler does not leave us in the dark. He offers us as salvation from modern totalitarianism, a totalitarianism of older vintage based on hierarchically ordered truths, culminating in the revelations of one true religion.

When we examine the arguments advanced for this position we find that despite the great play made with terms like "Reason" and "Logic," the reasoning is very shabby. Its general pattern consists in making state-

[1]Quoted by Adler, "This Pre-War Generation," *Harper's*, October, 1940.

ments which are either commonplaces or tautologies, and then by a succession of *non sequitur*'s reaching conclusions which, more often than not, are absurdities. Or a very large statement is made, and the proof of it is left begging. Sometimes refutations of alternative positions to those of the Hutchins-Adler group are attempted by showing, again through *non sequitur*'s, that they have morally unacceptable consequences.

There is space for only a few illustrations. Take, for example, the famous series of propositions in Mr. Hutchins' *The Higher Learning in America,* in which he tries to justify the conclusion that education should everywhere be the same, which in turn is a required premise for the view that either theology or metapysics "must be called upon to order the thought of modern times." It reads: "Education implies teaching. Teaching implies knowledge. Knowledge is truth. The truth is everywhere the same. Hence education should be everywhere the same." Even discounting the ambiguous character of each statement, and the obviously undistributed middle-terms, the conclusion is a glaring fallacy, a complete *non sequitur,* since the premises justify the inference that education *is* everywhere the same, not that it should be. But were we to say that education is everywhere the same, the conclusion would be materially false. And if we mean that some process goes on wherever education goes on, then it is true tautologically, i.e., by definition of what we are prepared to recognize as education.

Or let us look at Mr. Adler's attempted derivation of the same conclusion: " . . . so long as what is generated remains specifically man, human nature remains constant from generation to generation. By human nature I mean the native abilities and the organic needs which everywhere constitute the same animal, known as man. . . . If man is a rational animal, constant in nature throughout history, then there must be certain constant feaures in every sound educational program, regardless of culture or epoch."[2] Leaving aside the dubious psychology and anthropology, which according to Mr. Adler are irrelevant anyhow, since the rationality and constancy of human nature are established either by definition or immediate insight, the conclusion can legitimately assert only the constancy of some educational process and not the constancy of any feature of any educational program, whether it be that of Hutchins-Adler or of anyone

[2]"The Crisis in Contemporary Education," *Social Frontier,* February, 1939.

else. That is to say, in one sense, it is a truism; in every other, plainly false.

Or take the following sentence from Mr. Hutchins, justifying the supremacy of metaphysics over science: "The natural sciences derive their principles from the philosophy of nature, which in turn depends on metaphysics." Neither Mr. Hutchins nor Mr. Adler makes an attempt to cite any specific principle or general law of natural science which is derived from the allegedly a priori and certain principles of the philosophy of nature. Their effort would be fruitless, for no such connection exists. In fact, the tentative and probable character of scientific knowledge, which at the same time is the most reliable knowledge we have, makes their whole theory of knowledge palpably inadequate. In consequence, they are compelled to resort to the desperate expedient of referring to the conclusions of experimental science as mere opinion. Mr. Adler scornfully says that "the contingent and tentative character of scientific knowledge perfectly fits the egoism, the individualism, the libertinism of the modern mind." Perhaps so. But he cannot furnish us with any example of a natural knowledge which is more reliable or more probable than the scientific truths he and Mr. Hutchins disparage. They believe that the immortality of the soul is more certainly true than that men will die, but they can hardly claim for the first the status of natural knowledge. Their suggestion that because scientific knowledge is tentative and contingent, one can therefore choose to believe anything at all with the same arbitrariness as a libertine follows his tastes, reveals that they have no conception of the way in which the freely accepted authority of scientific method operates to insure agreement.

The real animus of the philosophy of Messrs. Hutchins and Adler, and the chief ground for their emphasis on the primacy of theology and religion in education and culture, is manifested in their theory of values. It is here, too, that they appear most plausible to the philosophically naive who largely compose the audiences they usually address. They begin by contending that science cannot establish any values, and conclude that unless there is some absolute, immediate knowledge of values (and moral values imply a reference to the supernatural order and revelation), superior to any knowledge science can give, we logically *must* believe that might is right. The following is a representative citation from Mr. Hutchins, quoted with approval by Mr. Adler:

> For forty years and more our intellectual leaders [meaning John Dewey and others] have been telling us in fact that nothing is true which cannot be subject to experimental verification. In the whole realm of social thought there can, therefore, be nothing but opinion. Since there is nothing but opinion, everybody is entitled to his own opinion. . . . If everything is a matter of opinion, force becomes the only way of settling differences of opinion. And of course, if success is the test of rightness, right is on the side of the heavier battalions.[3]

Not a single sentence logically follows from its predecessor. That truths are subject to experimental verification no more makes judgments mere "opinions" in the social sciences than in the natural sciences. And if by "opinion" Messrs. Adler and Hutchins merely mean that our conclusions are only probable, then it doesn't follow in the slightest that any opinion is as good as any other, and that everyone is logically entitled to his own opinion. The opinion that diphtheria is caused by evil thoughts is not as valid as the opinion that it is caused by a certain germ; the opinion that it can be cured by exorcism is not as valid as the opinion that it can be cured by drugs or antitoxins. And yet all of these statements have varying degrees of probability. Not even if values were subjective, a possibility which Hutchins and Adler mistakenly believe to be the only alternative to their view, would it follow that force was the only way of resolving differences in value judgments, or that might could determine what is right. Like Job, everyone who goes down in a lost cause, every loser in a fight, can say:

> Behold he will slay me; I have no hope.
> Nevertheless will I maintain my way before Him.

This is the position, for example, of men like Justice Holmes, George Santayana, and Bertrand Russell. But neither this position nor that of the supernaturalists exhausts the alternatives.

The greatest error of Hutchins and Adler is to assume that because the *conclusions* of the *particular* sciences are neutral to values, scientific method is irrelevant to values. Given, however, the concrete, historical situations of need and interests, in relation to which proposals of action are made, only a scientific analysis of the context, causes, and consequences of the values to be furthered by such proposals, can determine their relative validity. And not only their validity. The very meaning of values de-

[3]As quoted by Adler, including ellipses, "This Pre-War Generation," *Harper's*, October, 1940.

pends upon investigations of this sort, for often the same set of terms is used to justify the most divergent of practices. From the fact that a man says he believes in the values, say, of justice, loyalty, personality, humanity—words which even Hitler employs—nothing in the way of practice follows at all. The philosophy behind progressive education does not deny the existence of value judgments. Rather has it made the scientific analyses of such judgments central to its outlook in order to develop a rationale which, in concrete situations, would make our choice between alternative proposals more intelligent. The scientific method of testing values is not circular because the problems of valuation are specific.

The history of ethical thought shows that where we do not rely upon scientific method but on absolute self-evident moral truths, authenticated by immediate intuition, they turn out so empty of content that nothing can be deduced from their assertion. Or, when they do have content, we find a welter of conflicting "truths" which, because they are all held absolutely, permit of no mediation by intelligent inquiry. The psychological consequence is that absolutists develop a tendency to speak to other absolutists in the language of force.

Like all philosophical positions, the philosophy behind progressive education is open to question. But before we abandon it, let us look at what Messrs. Hutchins and Adler offer as its necessary and inescapable alternative. According to them ethics and politics are sciences, superior (i.e., more rational) to any of the natural or experimental sciences. The basic truths of ethics and politics depend upon a metaphysical insight which is direct, immediate, and *certain*. Insofar as moral values imply a reference to the supernatural order and revelation, they are subordinate to the truths of sacred theology. Consequently, both on metaphysical and theological grounds, there can be "only one right set of principles, one right order of goods and values." This "one right order," it must be remembered, is not something to be discovered; it is something already absolutely known. Therefore, different and conflicting conceptions of this order are necessarily errors—errors which must lead, and have led, to the corruption of minds and the weakening of the foundations of public order. Now we do not tolerate the deliberate circulation of disease germs which kill men's bodies—and this in a field in which we have only probable knowledge or mere opinion. How, then, can we tolerate the circulation of errors that destroy men's souls and the fabric of Christian culture—

fields in which we are fortified by absolute knowledge? Differences on matters about which we have absolute knowlede must be heresies. Heresies of this kind in politics and ethics must be harmful. If public calamity is to be avoided, they must therefore be liquidated. Mr. Adler tells us: "When Christianity loses its active dislike of heresy, it loses its dignity as a revealed religion and becomes no better than one among the warring creeds, as it was in the Hellenistic period." In a recent address, Mr. Adler has made it clear that Christianity—or rather one species of it—must occupy a role in modern culture similar to the one it occupied in medieval culture, i.e., it must not take its chances in the conflict of doctrines, scientific, metaphysical or religious, but "must be accorded the supreme place in the cultural hierarchy." In the same address, he calls for the liquidation of professorial heresy and is prepared to see in Hitlerism an avenging instrument in the hand of Providence, if that is the only way the root heresy of our culture can be destroyed.

Let us not be deceived by the significance of Mr. Hutchins' pronouncements in favor of academic freedom, sincere as they undoubtedly are. For he is committed to doctrines which logically entail a denial of academic freedom to those heretics who are devoid of *the* knowledge of *the* true and *the* good, and *the* right social order based on them. The more ardently he professes both his belief in academic freedom and his belief in absolute premises which absolutely negate the presuppositions of academic freedom, the more apparent his intellectual confusion. In times of crisis, the logic of doctrines is more compelling upon action than are good intentions.

There is nothing new in the position of Hutchins-Adler, and there is very little which is true whenever they speak about matters on which evidence is available. Their fundamental error is to assume that social stability, individual security, and intelligent freedom can be established on the basis of any theology or metaphysics instead of through the appropriate modification of our scientific, legal, social, political, and educational practices, designed to meet the specific problems of unemployment, war, poverty, artistic and intellectual frustration whose urgency is apparent to all thoughtful minds.

What is dangerous about the positions of Messrs. Hutchins and Adler is that their doctrines have become part of the current wave of thought and action which seeks to undermine the separation of church and state

in American culture. If successful, such a movement would substitute for the present free competition of theologies and atheologies, which solicit the uncoerced emotional and intellectual assent of individuals, a state religion. Such a state religion, even if it could be established without a religious war between those who have conflicting sources of revelation, would have to impose, sooner or later, a conformity upon all heretics who are either so blind or so obstinate as not to grasp the self-evident truths of natural theology or the revealed truths of sacred theology.

Insofar as they attempt to argue their position, Messrs. Hutchins and Adler are reduced to pitiful sophisms which may impress some literary gentry and philosophically untrained minds. It is as cultural portents rather than as independent philosophers that these men are significant. They are not speaking metaphorically. Nor can what they say be tossed off as a harmless jest. At a time when we gird ourselves in defense of our democratic way of life against totalitarianism, they seek to raise a diversion by crying that John Dewey (whose lifework has consisted in clarifying and deepening the philosophy of democracy) and others who have followed his lead are greater enemies of democracy than Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin, Coughlin and other reactionary forces in America. At a time when intelligent believers in democracy must unite on a limited program against the greatest evil, they fashion the ideological premises which would unleash overt religious conflicts within the land. It is indeed true that those who think like Mr. Adler cannot have their field day with heretics until American democracy falls. Whether they themselves would survive the event is questionable. As Hitler has shown, when you begin by liquidating positivists, it is not only *their* heads which roll.

In the meantime those of us who are dedicated to the ideas of progressive education have as our task the extension and improvement of its practices on every level of education. We do not have to gloss over existing weaknesses and evils in rejecting the cure that kills. There is always the need to learn, to rethink, perhaps even to unlearn. So long as we hold to our principles not as arbitrary prejudices nor as absolute self-evident dogmas, but as hyoptheses warranted by knowledge and experience, we can learn what is necessary for both the survival of democracy and its further extension.

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